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AND
China Overland Trade Report.

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BIRTHS.

On April 18th, at H.B.M. Consulate-General, Hankow, the wife of E. H. FRASER, Esq., of a daughter.

On May 1st, at Shanghai, the wife of J. H. HINTON, a son.

On Sunday, 3rd May, at "Eilandonan," the Peak, Hongkong, to Mr. and Mrs. A. G. COPPIN, a daughter.

On May 4th, at Tyrella Rectory, Co Down, the wife of L. A. M. JOHNSTON, of a daughter (still-born).

MARRIAGE.

On May 1st, at Shanghai, DOROTHY WIDLER to W. A. ROBERTS.

DEATHS.

On April 9th, on board the steamer *Vorwaerts*, between Penang and Madras, GERHARD HUGO THEODOR WILLKOMM, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Willkomm of Shanghai, aged 2 years.

On April 30th, at Shanghai, of heart failure, RAHAMIM MOSHE BENJAMIN of the Shanghai Mutual Telephone Office, aged 24 years.

On April 30th, at Shanghai, ELIZABETH, infant daughter of Alexander Nichol, I.M.C.

On May 4th, at Kowloon Hotel at 12.30 p.m. JAMES WILLIAM OSBORNE, aged 65 years.

Hongkong Weekly Press.

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ARRIVAL OF MAILS.

The German Mail of the 7th ult. arrived by the N.D.L. steamer *Euelow* on the 5th inst.

The French Mail of the 10th ult. arrived per s.s. *Ernest Simons*, to-day the 11th inst.

FAR EASTERN NEWS.

His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to direct that the Ordinance No. 1 of 1908, entitled An Ordinance to amend the Fire Brigade Ordinance, 1868, shall come into operation as and from the first day of February, 1908.

His Excellency the Governor has given his assent, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty the King, to the following Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council:—Ordinance No. 7 of 1908:—An Ordinance to enable Foreign Corporations to acquire and hold land in the Colony.

Another gambling raid fatality took place on May 2nd. When the police visited 12 U Lok Lane, West Point, for the purpose of executing a gambling warrant somebody gave the alarm and the usual panic ensued. One man leaped from a window on the first floor to the street below and struck his head on a door step. His skull was fractured and he died shortly afterwards in the hospital.

A special meeting of the Sanitary Board was held on May 5th to consider a report by the Colonial Veterinary Surgeon that rinderpest had broken out on the Dairy Farm premises at Kai Lung Wan. The Veterinary Surgeon stated six cows were affected and these had been put in the hospital shed and the contacts inoculated. On the motion of the President, seconded by Mr. Shelton Hooper, the place was declared an infected area.

On May 5th a Chinaman went into Messrs. Gaupp's shop and purchased a gold watch for \$45, tendering in payment what looked like a fifty dollar bill. He was handed \$5 in change and when he went out it was discovered that the bill was only for ten dollars, and that the figures round the sides had been cleverly altered, the one in front of the cypher being changed to five, while the words ten dollars remained distinct in the body of the bill. The police were acquainted with the matter and they are endeavouring to trace the man.

An Indian policeman on duty at Tai-po in the New Territory was on May 5th fined \$25 or five weeks' imprisonment for assaulting a native and committed to prison for six weeks without the option of a fine for recklessly discharging his revolver. Apparently he was celebrating his return from Hongkong by drinking from a bottle of gin which he had purchased until he became intoxicated. Then he stumbled into a ma shed and becoming annoyed at the cook he sat upon him and beat him, ending his performance by firing two shots from his revolver in the air.

According to the "Sinwên-pao" a patrol of the Imperial Guards, whilst making their rounds in the vicinity of Eho Park Palace the other day, arrested two soldiers belonging to the Foreign legation guards in Peking who had been caught maltreating a young girl, the daughter of a farmer named Fei, who lives at the foot of Wanshou hill, just outside Eho Park. It appears that the victim resisted the attack whereupon the soldiers stabbed her in the side and, upon the alarm being raised and a gendarme appearing, he also was wounded by the foreign soldiers. Fortunately a patrol of Imperial Guards came up and arrested the men whom they handed over to an officer at the Ministry of War.

The importation into Hongkong through the Post Office of any seditious publication by any correspondence is prohibited by regulations made by the Governor-in-Council. The Postmaster-General may seize all such seditious publications and cause the same to be returned to the post office at which they were mailed.

On May 7th an American named J. A. Mackenzie who arrived here a few days ago from Manila, committed suicide in the Oriental Hotel, where he has been staying since his arrival. On presenting himself at the Hotel on Monday he was in a very exhausted condition and explained that he had had a rough passage from Manila and had been very sick. He engaged a room—one on the top floor being placed at his disposal,—and kept to it all the time. He drank a good deal of whisky, so much so that the manager of the hotel felt called upon to restrict his supply, and all his meals were served in his room. On Wednesday morning the manager entered the visitor's room and engaged him in conversation for a time in the course of which Mr. Mackenzie thanked him for his friendly intervention and asked him to accompany him to Messrs. Shewan Tomes and Co. in order to book his passage to Manila. The manager consented. Nothing transpired to arouse his suspicion that the visitor contemplated suicide. Yesterday about five minutes past two a shot was heard and the manager was at once informed, and he proceeded to the room, having in the meantime called the police. Mr. Mackenzie was found stretched on the bed, partly dressed, with a bullet wound above the left temple. He expired about five minutes afterwards. One of his portmanteaux was open, and it was apparently from this that he had just taken his Colt revolver. Four of the six chambers were loaded. Deceased was about 40 years of age, of slender build, medium height, and clean shaven excepting a moustache.

THE RE-REVISION OF TREATIES.

The following statement emanates from the Foreign Office in Tokyo in regard to the negotiations for the coming revision of the treaties:—

When the existing treaties were signed, the primary object was the removal of the extra-territorial rights of foreign Powers in Japan. As Japan was so eager for the recovery of judicial autonomy and as her position in the comity of nations had not then reached its present level, naturally some inequalities in the treaties were unavoidable, in particular the failure to secure complete Customs autonomy being disadvantageous to Japan. Now it must be the unanimous desire of the people of the Empire to remove this inequality and recover the Customs autonomy, and this is the primary object of the forthcoming revision of treaties. To what extent the amendment of the Customs tariff can be effected it is difficult to predict before the completion of a full investigation of the matter; but the Government desires to amend it on a footing of equality with other Powers. The Finance Department has been investigating the condition of production and consumption of all commodities, and the Foreign Office has of late also been considering the economic situation, and all other matters necessary for the revision of the treaties.

THE LEGISLATIVE DEBATE.

(Daily Press, May 2nd).

"Almost thou persuadest" would occur to many pro-Commission minds after reading the speech to the Legislative Council by the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE. It was indeed a masterly bit of pleading, but we do not wish to follow the example of praising the speech and condemning the argument. It is a poor compliment to any man to tell him he has made a fine speech and then to vote against him. It is just as bad to flatter a man on his eloquence and then attack him for saying something he never said. The Hon. Mr. OSBORNE observed that in Hongkong it is the practice to strangle industrial enterprise with vexatious conditions. The Hon. Mr. MAY's argument was all to show that such enterprise had not been strangled with vexatious prices, which is quite another story. The land allocated may not cost too much when taken over, but its subsequent development, on lines for which it was acquired, may, by reason of vexatious conditions then and subsequently imposed, which we think is what the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE meant. He certainly said nothing about the price of land being prohibitive, and his phrase covers far more than the point laboured by the Hon. Mr. MAY. Another critic was the Hon. Dr. Ho KAI, who accused the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE of making a mistake in ignoring the fact that it is the Chinese labour which really makes the trade of the port. The whole point of the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE's argument that there should be no turning back from the work of purification begun in 1903 rested on the necessity of making the conditions favourable to the health of the population, which means primarily, of course, the health of the labouring population. His picture of "an empty and a ruined city, with a commerce departed never to return," was plainly a picture of a city that had been ruined by disease consequent on neglected sanitation. Thus so far, it will be seen, the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE's powerful plea has been attacked for defects it does not contain. In going on to our own criticism, we have to admit at once that the points we object to are mere excrescences, that do not affect the spirit and tenour of his thesis. Its main principles we could not feel confident about upsetting, so serious an impression does it make, and so effectively does it throw the shadow of doubt over hitherto cherished opinions. That is the greatest compliment we can pay him—not that his oratory compares favourably with Parliamentary efforts—but that it weakens the faith of the devout; that, in short, it has a converting power. Superficially, as we have said, we find features that offend. There are gratuitous remarks here and there that would mar the effect of a less forcible argument. There is no one less tolerant than the hater of intolerance, and therein we seem to see illustrated the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE's position when he complains of "the charges of incapacity and corruption levelled at the whole department," and when he complains that "from beginning to end of the Commissioners' report there is not one word of approbation, not the faintest meed of praise." Expensive commissions are not appointed to pay compliments to those who may happen to deserve them. The Commission found that many things were wrong, and its business and duty was to point them out. In entering in his log book that all the fore-castle hands were drunk and incapable, we would not expect the Captain to add, "but I have pleasure in recording the fact that the Chief Officer

was sober." That is very much what the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE, and possibly the sober officers of the Department, seem to have been expecting. The Hon. Mr. OSBORNE's complaint of the "cruel injustice" of "bespattering the characters" of such officers and servants as had nothing to blush for was mere rhodomontade, therefore; and the Commissioners would have been to blame if they had wasted time and money by inserting in their already voluminous report a lot of compliments that could only have obscured the more immediately important issues. In defence of those of us who may have been perhaps too heartily damning the bad elements of the Department, it might be shown that the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE, in spite of his eloquent tribute to its better elements, does not come far short of uttering expressions equally capable of wounding those susceptible members of the service who have apparently been fitting on caps not intended for them. The "unnecessary harshness" of the administration he barely admitted, though it is suggestive to find him remarking that "the whole Sanitary department from President downwards should understand that the law was not framed for the purpose of harassing and annoying," and that above all they should "avoid a senseless interpretation of the law." He also granted "the misplaced zeal, stupidity, and arrogance of subordinates," and that admission implies of necessity either incapacity or neglect among those who are not subordinates. There has been, also, in his own words, a senseless interpretation of the law, but whether property interests would be any safer from such under an elected body with fuller powers than they would be under the Official-medical-cum-Building Authority-cum-Cadet system is a theory that the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE encourages us to doubt. We must admit with him that much good sanitary work has been done, but we are by no means immune from communicable diseases yet, and in view of certain liabilities that no precautions can relieve us from it is irritating to be vexed by professional fads, and red-tape administration of inelastic byelaws or ordinances. What is wanted, to quote the Hon. Mr. OSBORNE's memorable phrase, is an end of the "administrative incapacity to apply the law in a common-sense and reasonable fashion," and so far as the Commissioners' recommendations seem to promise that consummation, and only so far, they should receive support. For ourselves, we do not think we can be accused of having helped to foster the delusion that this community is "crushed beneath the heel of official tyranny," though we do persist in the assertion that it has been sometimes pricked by extravagant official fads, against which there ought to be some check, presumably at the Sanitary Board. As a result of this latest debate in the Legislative Council, however, we now entertain the hope that a happy issue is in sight. We have more than a hope—it is our conviction that a suitable compromise is already casting its shadow before us.

DISRANKED MISSIONARIES.

(Daily Press, 4th May.)

Few Chinese edicts have been more quietly received, considering its importance, than the recent one depriving Roman Catholic missionaries of the official (Chinese) rank they have been enjoying since Bishop FAVIER got it for them in 1899. The Chinese Government has thereby in one coup abolished a number of annoying anomalies, and probably prevented a recurrence of the

peculiar troubles that many people have been attributing to these false positions of the priests. Over forty Roman Catholic bishops in China had viceregal rank, and some of them (if not all) moved about with the parade of Viceroys. Well over a thousand priests similarly pranced about as prefects. The whole business has always been, of course, a direct violence to the religion they teach, as is, indeed, the ostentation of a bishop in any European country. Only in China the evil example has been exaggerated. These men may claim apostolic succession, but they certainly do not cultivate apostolic simplicity and meekness. In China this assumption of high rank by missionaries has meant more than a breach of religious decorum. It has aggravated the worries incidental in any case to the presence of foreign propagandists in such large numbers. Some of the men have been accused of abusing the privilege which was, of course, bestowed for a special reason, on the Jesuitical principle of the end justifying the means. But there is no need to go into that. Even if the accusations of the past can never be substantiated the position itself was manifestly intolerable. It made the Protestant missionaries—who dare not approve all means to a desired end—jealous, because they looked upon it, no doubt, as giving the rival propagandists an unfair advantage. The Protestant missionaries in conference at Shanghai about the same time decided against applying for a like privilege. Public opinion at home would probably have been so much against it, if they had, that their funds derived from collections and offertories would have been in peril of dwindling to very little. Politically there were strong objections to the play-acting that has been going on for nearly a decade, with such results, by the way, as modified the Protestant idea that the system gave their rivals an advantage over them. It is perhaps not insignificant that the Boxer horror should have come to a crisis so soon after the priests began to masquerade as officials among the Chinese. The political objections referred to may be inferred from the fact that while a French consul might be negotiating with a Taotai, a French bishop could be negotiating on the same subject, and over his head, with a Viceroy, although the said bishop legally speaking was subject to the authority of the Consul. The same would apply also, of course, to such other nationalities, represented in the missionary fraternity, as had consuls on the spot. That the Chinese did not like it goes without saying, and now that it is ended, we trust they will be less ruffled by the presence of their uninvited mentors. It depends now almost entirely on the behaviour of the latter how the Chinese will treat them, which is as it should be.

CHINESE SO DIERS.

(Daily Press, May 5th.)

Some time ago, talking of the new Chinese military ambitions, and of sundry nervous "yellow peril" comments thereon, we quoted a conversation we had had with a high officer of His Imperial Japanese Majesty's army, who had been giving us his reasons for believing that the modern military movement in China could not have adequate results for a long time to come. The chief reason had reference to the lack of morale, and the neglect of the reforms necessary to inculcate and develop that essential motive of good soldiering. As a subject for debate the question has no possibilities, being worn threadbare, and the only excuse for again referring to it at present is that we have

recently been coming across some very interesting confirmation of the fact that Chinese soldiers are still a long way from the conditions that alone can knit them into an effective army. To the disorderly behaviour of the modern troops at various places from the neighbourhood of Shanghai northwards we need not again refer, as such incidents are not uncommon and have been briefly noted in our news columns from time to time. But one illustration is too attractive not to be added to any record of things Chinese. Writing to a contemporary an eyewitness tells what he observed during a voyage up the Canton river. Eight soldiers travelled on the launch to protect it from robbers, but they threw aside their equipment and spent the whole day gambling. Not until they were reaching Canton, when it was no longer necessary, did these soldiers arm themselves or show any signs of being prepared for emergencies. The foreigner was interested, and got into conversation with the officer commanding the squad. He elicited the admission that this belated show of alertness was necessary now because they were at last liable to be overlooked by someone in authority. The "sergeant" appears to have confessed that their behaviour had not been soldierlike, but pleaded that military conscientiousness was difficult to keep up to standard for seven dollars per month, which was all the Emperor allowed each man. "Behold that private's trousers, supplied to him by the Emperor. They are full of holes, and he has been obliged to provide himself at his own cost with an inner pair, to keep his legs warm. What can the Emperor expect, for seven dollars per month? Why even I"—and here we can sympathise with the feeling of injustice that must have shown itself through the words—"even I get only twelve dollars per month." Evidently His Imperial Chinese Majesty needs a lot more servants of the YUAN SHIH-KAI breed.

SHARES.

(Daily Press, May 6th.)

Owing to local operations into a description of which we cannot enter, some people at Shanghai have been conducting a little argument as to the correct method of calculating the real value of company shares. Experience teaches that at Hongkong as well as Shanghai the published Stock Exchange quotations are rarely a safe guide to market values; they may approximate current prices, though very often they fail even to attain that measure of accuracy as indicators. To a forced seller, the real value of his holdings is what they will fetch. The eager buyer cannot as easily ascertain the current market value, for it often happens (owing to the extent to which gamblers intervene) that his own bid inflates the quotation. It "hardens" or "stiffens" the market; that is, it excites the rapacity of the sellers and on the sellers' agents. In order that a bona-fide investor, who wants to exclude as much of the element of gambling from the transaction as possible, may know what is a fair price to name in his firm offer, various particulars of the financial standing of a company are obtainable. The Shanghai argument, conducted in the correspondence columns of the newspapers, has been concerned with the question, which of the statistics offered have the truest bearing on the desired estimate. More explicitly, which should be taken most into calculation, the assets, reserves, &c., of the Company, or the dividends it has been paying? "Both," though rather Irish, would seem to be the proper answer; but at Shanghai

the rival merit of each has been upheld. The champion of assets demands, "If a company has a bad year and does not pay over four per cent, but has assets to double the value of the market value of the shares why should the shares drop?" The champion of dividends says that in such circumstances shares always do drop—that it is "the fundamental law." Therefore "the value of a share is determined by its dividend earning capacity." This gentleman obviously means the true value to the true investor, seeking a certain percentage of income from his capital, and as it is obvious that his future income depends not only upon the percentage of returns made by the enterprise chosen, but also on the security of his capital, he must consider both sets of data before investing. He will naturally be willing to pay a higher premium for a sound stock. It is, however, not so simple as a question of what he is willing to do, but what he is able to do. Until his capital is invested he has no income, or none more than a bank will give him in the shape of interest. When he enters the market as an investor, he is in the position of a man embarking in a boat. His notions of seamanship may be sound, his craft seaworthy, but no navigator may shut his eyes to the fortuitous perils of the seas. These, in our local Rialtos, are represented by the numerous buyers to whom the dividend returns are a secondary concern. It is no use saying that rocks ought not to be there because the chart shows none, and sailing straight on. The breakers must be noted. This means that even if the percentage of returns is good and promises to be reasonably permanent, given fair play and ordinary conditions, the investor should look also to the character and habits of the management, of the directors. Are they speculators or gamblers? Is the stock a favourite with operators? Do its quotations fluctuate considerably? If so, let it alone. The amount of the dividend, the existence of a dividend at all, depends largely on the whim of the directors. Business may have been good, but they may go in for enlarging reserves or extending operations, or for any excuse to change the usual returns. If they are themselves operators, they will do that, or decide to do that, so as to affect the quotations in favour of their own operations and the ordinary shareholders are practically helpless. Say *The Godown*, a curiously interesting Shanghai publication, let us assume that a widow with four and a half children had invested her entire fortune of Tls 30,000 in these shares at a price of Tls 220 three years ago. She depends for the living of herself and her fractional family on the dividend earning capacity of these shares, and they have given her a steady income for three years of about Tls 200 a month. Then one day this esteemed widow, who is just as shrewd as most men and who, besides, enjoys the advantage of possessing fractional family discovers that, although her "security" remains unimpaired her income for the year, and for the year after next, and for the next year after that, will gradually undergo a process of pruning in the following ratio: 1906 Tls 205 per month, 1907 Tls 195 per month, 1908 Tls 120 per month, 1909 Tls 100 per month—all because her shares during 1908 and the following years will not earn enough money. Although her "security" is good enough, what do you think this shrewd widow will do? Remember, she is used to an income of 200 Taels a month, and that is all she has got. She will promptly sell her shares (especially if she can find any one foolish enough to pay her 220 taels for them) in spite of any valuable assets of the company, and she will invest her little capital in the shares of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank or in the Land Investment Co. or in some other gilt-edged stock which will give her a monthly income of 200 Taels. And a great many others, similarly situated, will do

the same thing. Knowing this, a great many other clever people, who are not necessarily obliged to sell their holdings, take advantage of this knowledge and at once dispose of their shares, well knowing that the market will be flooded with shares, and that therefore the price must come down. When the market, for these reasons, has regulated the true price of the shares, (which is their dividend earning capacity) the clever operator may possibly buy back at their true value (Tls 150) the very same share he sold a few months before at Tls 220.

It is manifestly silly to value shares on the company's assets alone, for the chance is the shares must be cashed long before the assets are realized. The same authority estimates the value of four stocks on the basis of their assets, and gets these startling prices, truly a *reductio ad absurdum*: Banks, Tls. 4213.17; Shanghai Lands, Tls. 502.10; Shanghai Gas, Tls. 311.50; and Municipal Debentures, Tls. 1365.02. That is to burlesque the argument, however, and though it may betray a shortage in our sense of humour, we will repeat that the only way to find the real value of shares is to reckon the assets, the average dividend, the capacity of the management, the character and habits of the directors, the present state and prospects of the business, the veracity of the enticing broker, to allow for unforeseen contingencies, and then, having done all this, it is better to burn the calculations and go to a lawyer to buy a first mortgage. Even then it is the barest prudence to insist on an excessive margin—in the Far East, anyway.

REACTIONARIES AND RAILWAYS.

(Daily Press, 7th May.)

A Visit to Chinkiang and Nanking by the newly opened railway cannot fail to indicate how powerful is the reactionary movement at present sweeping over the Empire, and how helpless in the struggle are momentarily the causes making for good. The railway itself, constructed to be the main highway of China, and to link up with the great north and south artery from Peking to the South, was in the beginning laid out on an ample scale; the line has been formed to take a double line of rails, the rails are of full weight, the bridges and abutments well designed and solidly built, and ample space provided for future stations and goods stores in view of future developments. With a similar object the locomotives and rolling stock are of the best. The engines, with a view to economy in the long run, are heavy, and ample space has been given for access to the machinery; to suit the climate, the carriages have been given greater height than is the custom in Europe; while first and second classes are well upholstered, and well mounted on strong bogie frames. It was thought wiser at first, in order to prevent future trouble, to increase the height and width of the loading gauges, so that the errors which have already cost the British railways many millions sterling should not be repeated in China, and the result is that the Shanghai-Nanking railway starts as one of the best equipped lines in the world. The capital, it may be remembered, has been found by an English syndicate and in view of the prospects of the line in the present, and its capacity for future extension, there is no doubt that it has done the best, not only for its contributors, but for China, in thus equipping the line at the start. Unfortunately the view taken by the reactionary party, who, next to having no railway at all, would much prefer that it should be inefficient in every way, conflicts with that of the projectors on

all these points; and as one of its leaders, the incapable and irreconcilable SHANG KUNGPAO, is at the moment in high favour at Peking, it may readily be conceived that no stone is left unturned to hamper the new enterprise. We lately referred to the suicidal step sanctioned by Peking of inflicting on the line the curse of likin; the effects of this insane policy are already being heavily felt. Notwithstanding the competition of the waterways alongside, the superior facilities offered by the railway were already beginning to attract goods traffic to the line, and consequent on this the passenger record was rapidly growing. Already the goods traffic is a thing of the past, no one daring in the face of the uncertain, and unascertainable tariff, as well as of the unfriendliness of many of the local officials, to venture on sending their goods; while it is evident that pressure of some sort is being made use of to hinder the passenger traffic. It is at least noteworthy that the trains of passenger boats between Shanghai and the other towns served by the railway, so far from falling off, as was naturally expected after the opening of the line, are actually within the last few months increasing both in number and size, while the railway receipts from passenger traffic are, to all appearance, falling off. As the railway administration under the influence of old Chinese official practices, refuses to publish the tables of receipts universal elsewhere throughout the world, it is, of course, impossible to speak from certain knowledge of these things, but there is little doubt that coincident with the enforcement of likin, and the presence of likin officials about the stations on the line, the traffic has been paralysed. It had been in contemplation to form an extensive jetty at Chinkiang, and to establish a line of steamers across the River to the mouth of the Imperial Canal, only a few miles off. Under the new influence all these projects have been countermanded. The opening of such facilities would undoubtedly attract for the line the greater part of the enormous traffic now passing down the Canal from Tsing Kiang Pu, but in view of the obstructions actually placed in the way of traffic, as a fact, there is practically no goods traffic whatever from Chinkiang, notwithstanding its commanding position opposite the Imperial Grain Canal.

Seen even from a Chinese point of view the folly of the present system is self-evident. The Central Government has agreed to pay annually interest on the capital advanced by the syndicate for the construction of the line, and naturally under the circumstances has every interest in advancing the prosperity of the line. This view of the case is as plain to a Chinese officer as to the European financier, and it is absurd to attribute its action in any way to ignorance. It is certain, seeing the unprofitable nature of the line as at present worked, that the Syndicate will not be disposed to abate in any manner its annual claims, so that in all probability Peking will have to find the difference due to its own folly. Of course following the usual Chinese practice, no accounts are published of traffic receipts, nor is there any means of arriving at statistics. The Syndicate of course kept the construction accounts, and have regularly rendered them; but there does not seem to exist any system of checking on behalf of the syndicate the accounts of the revenue collected. That is accounted for only to the Chinese directorate, and is not subject to control by the English syndicate. Under the circumstances advantage has been taken by the reactionaries, conspicuous amongst whom is SHENG KUNGPAO, to misrepresent

the affair at Peking. We have stated the reason why the line has been an expensive one, and SHENG has lost no opportunity of enlarging on this, and pretending that it is to this that the failure of the line to pay interest is due. As they have no means of officially arriving at the real position of the receipts, the Syndicate is at a manifest disadvantage. Meanwhile the line has already commenced to deteriorate, the rolling stock is not kept up to the same standard as formerly; the third class carriages are rapidly arriving at the normal state of all conveyances in China, the corridors of the carriages are getting out-at-elbows, the platforms are, with the partial exception of Soochow, all exposed to the weather, and the works commenced for these improvements have practically been stopped. Chinkiang, the most promising station on the line, is open but is a long way from the city, and no attempts to make roads are being made, and the intended jetty a matter of necessity for the development of the line is postponed indefinitely. Worse than all this the Chinese system of doing everything by deputy has already taken root. The appointees to the various posts prefer to take their salaries without doing the work, and sublet their tasks to substitutes at lower wages, so that insubordination and rudeness is gradually taking the place of the management commenced by the Syndicate. No one, in fact knows to whom he is responsible, and the directors find their employees have so many intermediate masters that supervision is becoming impossible. This is already the condition, a few months after the final opening to Nanking; we may easily foresee what, under the rule of the reactionaries, the main line of China is likely to become when the system has got into full swing.

A curious instance of the sort of railway beloved of the Chinese Government is competing with the British syndicate for the construction of the proposed line to Ningpo. At the beginning of last year it may be remembered the Shanghai Taotai cut in regular form the first sod of a purely Chinese railway from Shanghai to Kiahing, an important city in the Chekiang province, and which was to be a lesson to the foreigner as to what Young China could do. A few weeks ago its opening to Sungkiang, about twenty miles from Shanghai was announced. Before the first week was over it was already the scene of an accident, only prevented from being serious by the fact that there were no passengers. The line is unballasted for the most part, that being of course a useless expense, the train when it goes at all dare not proceed at a rate of over ten miles an hour, that being the official limit; it possesses a single engine, an old fashioned American one, and four cattle trucks and a goods waggon by way of passenger vehicles. Such are railways à la mode in modern China under the management of SHENG KUNGPAO and his reactionary friends; and this is the system that has found western financiers willing to advance their money on without guarantee of any sort that the work is to be properly constructed, or that the railway be not permitted to at once fall into ruin; in addition to traffic being made impossible by the levy of likin and other taxes on merchandise in transit, fixed according to the caprice of local officials who have paid in advance for their posts on the understanding that they shall be permitted to charge at discretion. We do not deny that the country at large is ready for reform, but unfortunately it is the Reactionary party who at present rule the land, and till China awakes, or be awakened to the necessity of moving, there seems little hope for her

return to wiser councils. Railways are but an example, if such were needed, of the present misrule which is reviving the vitals of the land.

OF TROUSERS.

(Daily Press, 8th May.)

In these days of newspaper and magazine advertisements, the Recording Angel mentioned by STERNE—the one who enters up all the lies and imprecations—must be very busy. It may be too much, even though scriptural, to say that all men are liars; but it is no exaggeration to say that all advertisement writers are. They seem to think they have unlimited credit at the Bank of Credulity, and are constantly drawing cheques on it. Some of these overdrafts are delightfully impudent. The man who wishes to persuade Carlyle's "mostly" compatriots that his pill is a panacea adopts and patronizes philosophy, quotes the classics, and pats modern poetry on the back. The huckster who is about to thrust an unusually glaring mendacity upon us brandishes his index finger and bids us remember that "facts are chiefs that winna ding." The advertisement writer adopts the tactics of the early Methodist or Salvationist; he offers us only one alternative; we must line up with him or go to hell. We have a gleam of comfort while undergoing this persecution. We are not obliged to read his essays, the publication of which costs him quite a pretty penny, and many of us do not. The pity of it is that so many do. One advertisement in a recently received English magazine did what it was meant to do. It caught our eye. It was a picture of two pairs of trousers, one pair wrinkled, the other looking fresh from the tailor's goose, two straightly creased and dangling elliptic tubes. Beside the picture was a big-lettered announcement to the effect that "the good appearance of your clothes is not a luxury but a necessity. The clothes proclaim the man." The elliptic tubes, we should have thought, would more proclaim the tailors' dummy. From an æsthetic point of view, we admired more the wrinkled garment pictured. There is nothing artistic or picturesque about straight lines, about parallel cylinders elliptical in cross-section, whereas curves and wrinkles are in themselves attractive to the eye. The mischief of the trouserman's bold assertion lies in the impression it may make on callow minds, confirming in such intellects the foolish tendency to waste time and thought on non-essentials—perhaps even to worry over them. Yet these are earnestly informed that the presence and uninterrupted continuity of the artificial longitudinal crease is not a luxury but a necessity, and that the absence of the creases and wrinkles that nature makes is to be insisted on. We know that with some people these considerations add to the cost, complexity, and trouble of existence, and as it is an irreligious age, it is our duty to warn them that such things are of no importance unless they chose to make them so. If a poor young man, worrying because of the bagginess at the knees of his nether garments, were to be also pious, he would not be long in discovering for himself the fact that the person who penned that advertisement was a brazen-faced perverter of the truth. For surely no sane person could take such a trouble to the Throne of the Omniscient in prayer, without suddenly realizing that the thing distressing him was a mere bogie built up with the rags of his own mind? "Happiness," says a recent writer, "has no tailor. It belongs to the soul, and a black

coat or a blouse is of no matter to it." What is true of the coat is true of the trousers. A clear conscience and a placid temperament are greater necessities than are trousers pressed into the shape approved by the perverted taste of the cross-legged tradesmen whose obiter dicta so many foolish ones "tremblingly obey."

SOME OPIUM HISTORY.

(Daily Press, 9th May.)

Mr. H. B. MORSE has written, and Messrs. KELLY AND WALSH LTD. have published, an important addition to the bibliography of China. Its title is "The Trade and Administration of the Chinese Empire." This is not a review of the book, as there has not been time yet to digest it; we wish only to call attention to a timely chapter on opium. Mr. MORSE discusses the thorny subject impartially; not as a partisan of the trade, whose "tendency is strong to leave the ground with which he may be familiar, that of commercial dealings and statistics, and to try to demonstrate the innocuousness of the drug as smoked by the Chinese—to compare it to the relatively harmless anti-prandial glass of sherry"; not as the anti-opium reformer, who "invariably seems impelled, by an irresistible inclination, to leave the high moral ground on which he is unassailable, and descend into the arena of facts and figures, with which he is not likely to be so familiar, and among which his predisposition will lead him to pass by or to misinterpret those which make against his case;" but as an investigating historian. He has certainly done it "in such a way that either party, by judicious selection of passages, may find arguments with which to confute his opponents." In the first half of the eight century, when the Arabs had been trading with China for a hundred years, occurs the first literary reference to the opium poppy in China, and soon afterwards repeated references to its culture occur. Its medicinal use was recorded in 973, as "poppy broth", and as "a drink fit for Buddha." SU CHE, a poet, wrote of it as a pick-me-up. Actual opium and its preparation is mentioned by Governor WANG HI before 1488, as learned from the Arabs. Opium smoking, it is suggested, came in after the Spaniards had introduced tobacco smoking, about 1620, and "the practice of smoking mixed tobacco and opium" probably came from Java by the Dutch via Formosa. The practice among the Mandarins is noted in STAUNTON'S account of Lord MACARTNEY'S mission in 1793. The first anti-opium edict was issued in 1729, when only two hundred chests of the foreign drug were being imported per annum. Those chests were brought in by Portuguese from Goa. English traders in it were not heard of till 1773, the East India Company starting in 1781. "The machinery of an Imperial edict cannot have been directed against so insignificant a quantity as 200 chests . . . and that it was not considered by the Canton authorities to be directed against the foreign importation, is shown by the gradual and unconcealed increase at the rate of twenty chests a year." In 1753 it paid a recognised official tariff of three taels a picul, or six per cent on value, then quoted Tls. 50. It was not till a new Viceroy at Canton obtained a new edict, in 1796, that all opium was forbidden. From 1800 the trade became contraband, and with official connivance, smuggling became an organized business. The alleged drain of silver for opium, says Mr. MORSE, "is not proved by facts," and he gives an interesting sketch of the early methods of barter which we need

not here quote. The flow of silver was all the other way, and merchants encountered the "imperative commercial necessity" of substituting a commodity that the Chinese would accept. "Opium was the one thing the Chinese would consent to buy, and buy it they did," in spite of the edicts. These were never enforced; for forty years there was no pretence of enforcement of their spirit, and the restrictions of their letter merely covered the traffic with a decent veil. Officials high and low eagerly profited by it. This went on regularly till 1838, when the import had grown to 20,619 chests. Then came the treaty of Nanking, which "left the Chinese Government free to adopt its own measures for the regulation of the opium traffic." The English Government forbade the establishment of an opium depot at the outset in Hongkong, and it afforded no naval protection to smugglers. After Lin's act in 1839, "the demand remained, new supplies came forward, and the trade went on." Among the opium then destroyed, were 1500 chests belonging to an American firm, and "some fifty chests of Turkey opium in the possession of an American firm were not surrendered as not being from India." Smuggling now greatly increased, still with official connivance, and there was none of the regulation hitherto in force. The result was that the import jumped to about 50,000 chests in 1850, and to 85,000 chests in 1860 "and as opium smoking had debauched the Chinese, the opium traffic debauched the foreign traders and dragged them down from their high estate." Though "the principal importers were English, there is nothing to show that traders of any nationality, who could lay hands on the drug, refused to deal in it." The author, be it remembered, is an American and a Harvard man, and he evidently has in mind sundry Poincaré indiscretions uttered by reformers of his own nationality. "For the pandemonium of the period 1840 to 1860 the Chinese must be held primarily responsible. The Emperor and his Commissioner LIN attempted the impossible in applying to foreign nations alone the restrictions which they could not enforce on their own subjects, so removing all regulation from a trade which they would not consent to legalise," while officials everywhere continued to act as if the trade were legal. It is to be hoped that those or similar words will not have to be written of the present agitation. The later so-called "opium wars" then pass under review. In 1858, opium was included in the tariff with the full knowledge and consent of the Chinese; of this "there is no doubt." The wisdom of legalisation *cum* regulation was fully explained to the Chinese, and the first suggestion that this should be considered came from the American Minister REED, who had come to China with a strong bias against the opium trade, but who became an advocate of its legalisation. Mr. REED wrote to Lord ELGIN that he was not sanguine of effective prohibition, in view of the inveterate appetite of the Chinese. In 1880 America agreed with China to forbid Americans from participating in the trade, but "when, in 1884-5, temporarily and for reasons over which the American Government had little or no control, the American flag reappeared on the coast and engaged in the carrying trade, no attempt was made to enforce the restriction." In 1879 the recorded import, 82,927 piculs, reached its maximum. Since then native opium has become an increasingly successful competitor. It is impossible to get trustworthy statistics, "since a commodity having so high a value in small bulk, and so heavily taxed, does not in

general follow the ordinary trade routes, on which taxing stations are numerous, but is carried by armed bands over unfrequented mountain roads, on which the taxing stations are few and so poorly equipped as to yield readily to superior force, and accept a composition for taxes much lower than the official rate." No foreign opium has ever been imported into Szechwan, yet the people of that province heavily and generally smoke. Giving statistics of the morphia trade Mr. MORSE says, "for one vice, both for its introduction and its maintenance, foreigners must be held responsible." That is the vice by injection.

SHIPPING ON THE CHINA COAST.

The "Customs Gazette" for October to December 1907 gives the quarterly returns of trade at the various Chinese ports. We take the following figures of the number and tonnage of vessels entered and cleared at the Maritime Customs during the quarter.

During the last quarter of 1907 the number of vessels entered at the port of Tientsin were 235, of 272,323 tonnage as against 269 of 370,000 tonnage for the corresponding quarter of 1906. Of these 171 were under foreign flags and 64 Chinese flags. The number cleared in the same period was 238 of 274,856 tonnage, also a decrease when compared with the corresponding quarter of last year.

At Chefoo 761 vessels of 546,821 tonnage entered as compared with 856 of 634,270 tonnage. Of these 654 flew foreign flags and 107 the Chinese flag. The number cleared was 751 vessels as against 846 in the corresponding quarter of 1906.

At Shanghai the number of vessels entered was 5,252 of which 1993 carried foreign flags and 3,252 the Chinese flag, the tonnage represented being 2204,603. This is a decrease when compared with the same quarter of 1906. The vessels cleared numbered 7227, a decrease of almost 1000.

At Foochow the vessels entered numbered 175 of 149,721 tonnage. Only 34 flew the Chinese flag. This is an increase over the corresponding quarter of 1906. Similar progress is pointed with regard to the number cleared.

At Amoy 1442 vessels of a total tonnage of 312,766 tonnage entered which was pretty evenly divided between Chinese and foreign bottoms, the total being a slight increase over the figures of the corresponding quarter of 1906. The same applies to the number of clearances, the total of 1443 showing an advance over the 1366 of the corresponding quarter of 1906.

At Swatow the number of vessels entered was 1482 of 370,545 tonnage, of which the bulk was Chinese, due to the large number of steam launches which inflated the return. The bulk of the tonnage was with the foreign ships. The clearances numbered 1485, an increase over the figure of the corresponding quarter of 1906.

The number of vessels entered at Canton was 5461 of 703,048 tonnage. Of the ships 3720 flew foreign flags and 2734 were under the Chinese flag. This is a reduction of almost 500 on the figures of the corresponding quarter of 1906 and the clearances numbering 6517 show a similar reduction under comparison.

Two European firms of jewellers have been victimised by a Chinaman whose dodge was, to say the least, very ingenious. He visited Messrs Falconer's on May 2nd and apparently noted the location of some diamond rings. He returned to the shop on May 4th and asked to examine the rings. He inspected them but did not purchase. After he had left the shop it was discovered that imitation diamond rings had taken the place of the genuine ones. The police were at once apprised of the occurrence and the assistant accompanied a detective to the wharf of the Canton steamers. By a stroke of luck they discovered the man coming on board wearing one of the rings, and he was promptly arrested and taken to the Police Station where it was discovered that he had committed a similar fraud on Sennet Frères. He will be brought before the Magistrate.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. OSBORNE'S SPEECH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."]

Hongkong, 2nd May 1908.

SIR,—I had the good fortune to be present during part of Mr. Osborne's eloquent address to the Council on the subject of the Amending Health Ordinance and in common with others present could not but be impressed by the incisive oratory of the speaker. When however I subsequently read the speech in the papers, in my own home and removed from the constraining influence of the speaker's voice, I found much in his speech that was inconsistent and much that was based on incorrect premises. I will refer first to his statement that "the outcome of this state of affairs was the original and drastic Ordinance of 1903" described by the Commissioners as the work of a novice." Mr. Osborne spoke at great length with this misquotation for a text. What the Commissioners did say was "The Public Health and Buildings Ordinance No 1 of 1903 as originally drafted was (as was pointed out in the influentially signed petition against it) the work of a novice." This is quite a different thing. In the petition referred to the following passage occurs "It reveals in the Bill the hand of the novice in building matters and one inappreciative of the rights of property. It shows that some provisions taken bodily from the English Statute book are practical and well drawn. It shows that others have been so altered in the taking as to be deprived of their original value and it exemplifies by many further instances the circumstance that throughout the Bill (with the single exception aforesaid) all the careful provisions of the English Acts for compensation wherever private rights are infringed have been scrupulously omitted." After receiving the petition the Government made many changes in the Bill before it finally became law but did not replace all the compensation clauses which had been "scrupulously omitted"—with what result to property owners we already know.

Yet in spite of numerous changes adopted upon the suggestions of owners, architects and others, the ink on the Bill was scarcely dry before whole sections of it were found to be unworkable and had to be amended. This looks as if the original draft was, if not the work of a novice, some thing equally indifferent.

Mr. Osborne was inconsistent in several ways. He commenced his speech by an unqualified condemnation of official administration. To use his own words from 1841-1844 the Colony was "neglected unguided and maturing in an atmosphere of drift . . . not till 1894 did official apathy heedless of warnings yield to a sense of its obvious duty." After virtually accusing the Government of maladministration for over half a century he, in a later part of his speech, goes on to say: "To change this system (i.e. Crown Colony Government) for that of Government by an Elected Assembly would be fraught with injury to the Colony." His glowing eulogy of the Crown Colony system of Government loses much of its value following after his previous denunciation. His praise of officials as a whole (though I will not say they are undeserved) is somewhat counterbalanced by such expressions as "unless the high officials protect the public against the misplaced zeal, stupidity and arrogance of subordinates there will continue to be irritation antagonism and trouble." This sounds almost like an echo of the Commission as also the expression "there should be some simple form of appeal." Mr. Osborne objects (inter alia) to a Municipality because civilians are "here to-day and gone to-morrow." If this is so are not officials here this morning and gone this afternoon? If this argument means anything it means that those who own control support and operate the commerce of the Colony, who possess practically all the property in it are more likely to ruin the Colony than those who would not be seriously affected by any calamity to the Port. It may be sound but it is not logic.

However I agree with Mr. Osborne in not desiring a Municipal Council, not for his very inconsistent reasons but for the same reason I do not desire the moon.

Having dealt with inconsistencies and incorrect premises I will now refer to Mr. Osborne's remarks about the Commission.

He said "From the beginning to the end of the report there is not the faintest meed of praise, not one word of approbation." The Commissioners were not instructed to award praise. If Sir Matthew Nathan had considered the Sanitary Department worthy of praise, no Commission would have been appointed. All the Commissioners had to do was to decide:—

(1) Whether the Administration of the Sanitary and Building Regulations as here carried out were satisfactory, if not, what improvements could be made.

(2) Whether any corruption existed or had existed. The Commissioners found that effective administration was conspicuous by its absence and that bribery and corruption amongst a considerable number of subordinates were rampant. They also suggested certain improvements. The charge of ineffective administration receives its answer and acceptance in the appointment of a cadet as administrative head with no other duties. The charge of corruption is endorsed by the imprisonment of one and the dismissal of several other subordinates. With regard to improvements, some of the Commissioners' suggestions are being adopted in whole or in part. No doubt, as Mr. Osborne points out, the conduct of some of the subordinates during the perilous times of 1894 was worthy of praise but personal bravery in 1894 was outside the scope of the Commission.

It is true that the health of the Colony, especially as regards malarial fever, is better (the roads however on the lower levels are much worse) but I question very much whether the enormous sums spent in various plague measures have been very successful—we have not had much plague for some years, neither has Canton. When Canton is infected and we are not I will believe, meanwhile I am inclined to concur with the Hon. Messrs. Lockhart, May and Chaham who reported as follows:—"In spite of the many workers and of the most drastic measures the epidemic though undoubtedly confined within narrower limits was not got under one day sooner than it ceased of its own accord in the neighbouring city of Canton where no steps whatever were taken to combat the plague."

Mr. Osborne says the prosperity of Hongkong is due to shipping but as Dr. Ho Kai pertinently remarked "what is the shipping due to?" We have only three fundamental assets in this Colony and they are

- (1) A deep water basin or harbour at the gate of the Capital of South China.
- (2) Safety of Commerce and the protection of the lives and liberties of individuals.
- (3) Abundant cheap labour.

Where these conditions exist shipping and industries will follow. The Health Ordinance and the Guilds have done much to make cheap labour a thing of the past, but plague except in so far as it produced the Health Ordinance, has not increased the cost of labour.

Mr. Osborne does not seem to have much sympathy with landowners, but it is difficult to understand why individual property owners and not the Colony as a whole should be saddled with the cost entailed by fifty-three years "of an atmosphere of drift" especially as a responsible Government Official admitted before the Commission that there ought to have been more roads and wider roads and that the ground which should have been reserved for such had been sold by the Government and was bringing in a considerable revenue in the shape of taxes and Crown Rent, in other words the Government were profiting by the insanitary condition of the Colony.

In conclusion I would only say that as the Bill of 1903 was begotten of panic, so there was bound to be (as there has been) a strong reaction against it. But the mischief is for the most part done and it would not be wise to make any radical changes now such as largely increasing the number of persons that can be accommodated in a given space. When Chinese by the thousand were being ejected for overcrowding, houses by the hundred were run up for them by the local land companies and private owners. Are these all to become vacant? Some are already.

Yours truly,

HENRY HUMPHREYS.

THE BILL TO AMEND THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND BUILDINGS ORDINANCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."]

SIR,—Mr. Osborne's speech in the Legislative Council on Thursday last will, I believe, commend itself to most thinking men in this Colony. He dealt with a thorny subject in a broad and statesmanlike spirit, and set an example which, I hope, will be followed in all future discussion on the Bill. It seems to me that if only people in their criticism on the Bill and on the higher officials responsible for the administration and amendment of the Ordinance, would assume that all are trying to do their best for the sanitation and general welfare of the Colony, their criticism would carry more weight and raise less antagonism than much of the criticism hitherto directed against the amendments proposed by the Government.

I do not mean to suggest the approbation of the good intentions of the administrators of the law should blind us to their faults, but that appreciation of their intentions will render correction of faults easier and more certain.

In the general interests of the Colony a Building Ordinance imposing restrictions on owners of land is necessary, but a satisfactory Ordinance should be clear and definite, so that owners should be able to calculate with reasonable exactness what use they can make of their land. Building sites in the Colony vary between wide extremes in their desirability from a sanitary point of view. An area of 15ft. by 60ft. anywhere will accommodate a fair-sized Chinese house with all the restrictions as to roofed-over area at present in force, but the house built thereon will be more or less sanitary according to its position relative to neighbouring open spaces. It is obvious that a house built, say, facing a road on the sea front, or with a reasonably wide lane at the back, will be more sanitary than a similar house built facing a back street or with only a 6ft. scavenging lane at the back. But under the Bill the same main requirements are laid down for houses everywhere, and a power given to various authorities to grant exemption from the prescribed requirements in meritorious cases. The powers of exemption are almost unlimited; but no principles are laid down to guide the exempting authority—no regulations to guide an owner in estimating what use he can put land to in an exceptionally open locality in the event, say, of his desiring to replace old houses with new. The consequence is entire uncertainty in any given case as to what will be permitted and what will not, and uncertainty which under the present system cannot be ended until the owner has gone to the expense of having plans prepared and sent in to the Building Authority, and after many weeks' delay has succeeded in getting various exemptions granted.

It surely would not be an excessively difficult task to lay down certain general principles and to frame a statutory scale of requirements in typical instances; e.g., for corner houses, for houses with lanes at the back open at both ends, with lanes open at one end, with lanes exceeding a certain width, for houses in streets exceeding a certain width, for houses less than a certain depth. This could be done by by-laws with some few alterations of the Ordinance, and until this or something of the kind is done, so long will there be general dissatisfaction with the administration of the Ordinance. The unfettered discretion of any official or body of officials however eminent applied to building problems necessarily leads to uncertainty, and it is largely uncertainty as to what will be permitted, or what will not, in the future that is strangling building enterprise in this Colony.

The power of granting exemptions is conferred in most cases upon the Building Authority with an ultimate appeal against the exercise of his discretion to the Governor in Council. The principal objections to this scheme are that the personal element has undue weight, there is no guarantee of continuity of policy, there is no record of decisions kept in an available form for the guidance of owners, no principles are formulated in accordance with which applications will be refused or granted, and the

procedure of the tribunal of appeal is unsatisfactory. These objections can be to a large extent modified or removed by amendments some of which have been suggested above and others indicated below, and if that is done, I believe the scheme as a whole will be the most workable that can be devised under the present circumstances of the Colony.

The Building Authority is probably the individual in the Colony most capable of giving an independent and unbiased judgment upon the sort of questions with which he will be called upon under this scheme to decide. But he is an individual and human, does his work in private without having to formulate the reasons for his acts, as, for instance, a judge or a statesman has, and is sometimes one individual and sometimes another. Consequently he will be influenced by personal predilections, and there is a grave risk of lack of continuity in policy, hence the necessity recognised in Bill and Ordinance of providing an appeal from his decisions.

The tribunal of appeal provided is the Governor in Council, which consists of H. E. the Governor and a number of official and unofficial members, among whom is always the Director of Public Works. For an appeal tribunal to be satisfactory, it must be competent and unbiased, its procedure must be such as to give each party to the controversy upon which it has to adjudicate a fair and equal opportunity to state his case and answer the case of the other side, and it should be public, or at least its decisions should be publicly and fully recorded in an understandable form, especially in the case of an appeal from the decision of an officer who necessarily does his work in private. If these are the main requisites of a satisfactory tribunal, the present system must be materially amended before it can be considered satisfactory. In the first place the Director of Public Works is also the Building Authority, and takes part in the deliberations of the Council and advises the Governor upon his own acts as Building Authority without the person who is appealing against his decision having any opportunity of meeting, or even knowing the arguments he advances in support of that decision, and in the second the proceedings of the Council are secret and no record of its decisions or of the reasons or principles upon which it has acted in coming to a decision is available to any of the public. That the Governor in Council under a reformed procedure would be the best available, though not an ideal, tribunal I personally believe; at any rate, no other has as yet been suggested which would compare with it in essentials. The reforms required are obvious. The D.P.W. must, for the purpose of the fair exercise of this appellate jurisdiction only, be deprived of his privileged position, and whatever advice or reasons he gives H.E. or the hon. members of the Executive Council in support of his decision as Building Authority must be either communicated to, or advanced in the hearing of the party appealing, in such a manner as to give him a fair opportunity of answering the case made by the Building Authority. Merely to give the party appealing the right to appear personally, as is proposed in the Bill, is utterly illusory, and does not meet the real objections to the present procedure.

Under the Bill and Ordinance as they stand the Building Authority is practically an autocrat. There is, as is shown above, no effective appeal against his decisions on questions in which he has a discretion, and the number of these it is proposed to enlarge enormously, and on questions as to his duties and obligations and the extent and nature thereof he is the sole judge. No legal proceedings of any sort can under the Bill be taken to test the accuracy of his judgment or to compel the performance of his duties. The sole remedy left to an owner is to refuse to obey an order and let the B.A. prosecute him, and then defend himself by showing the illegality of the Order, but in cases in which the Building Authority breaks the law by not performing an act he ought to perform, the owner has absolutely no remedy if the B.A. has done what he has "done bona-fide for the purpose of executing this Ordinance." He cannot bring an action of any sort against the Government because the act complained of is a wrong, so

that no action will lie and he cannot bring an action of any sort against the individual officer by reason of the provision in the Bill.

The Building Authority by a strained interpretation of any one of a very large number of the sections of the Ordinance could inflict damage amounting in the aggregate to many thousands of dollars on the property owners of the Colony and as matters stand there is no means open to the victims of compelling either a correct interpretation of the law or reparation for injury inflicted. Mr. Pollock has put forward a proposal in the Legislative Council which if accepted will afford a cheap and speedy means of obtaining an authoritative interpretation of any section of which the meaning is in dispute. The method is one which has been found by practical experience to work well in the case of disputes as to the proper interpretation of wills and instruments regulating trusts, to which purpose it was first applied not very many years ago. I am not aware of any instance in which it has been used for the interpretation of a statute but there is no reason why it should not work equally well and relieve property owners in this Colony of the necessity of employing a more cumbersome and expensive procedure to ascertain their rights in the same way as it has relieved trustees and executors.

If amendments on the lines I have indicated above are made in the Ordinance I believe it will in future work with as much smoothness as such a stringent Ordinance ever can work, but without some such amendments there will be never-ending friction between landowners and the Government.—Yours, etc.,

MARCUS W. SLADE.

SANITARY LAW APPEALS.

(TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS.")

Hongkong, May 5th.

SIR,—Concerning the question of appeal, about which Mr. Slade has addressed you in a very able letter, I said at the Council meeting last Thursday "the future success or failure of the reorganized department will depend largely upon the broadmindedness of its President who whilst on the one hand will carry out the unalterable determination of government to cleanse this town in the interests of Public Health, will on the other hand initiate changes and reforms where the Law is found to be inapplicable. And it is to be hoped that when appeals to the Governor in Council are heard the President will be present to plead the cause of common sense."

Amplified in a manner which would have been impossible without exhausting the Council's patience, what I intended these words to convey was that the President should be a man selected for his breadth of view and sympathy with those who suffer by the operation of the Law; that he should make it his special concern not to allow anything to be done which in his opinion was not necessary from a Public Health point of view; that in fact he should protect the property owners and Chinese in much the same way as the Registrar General protects the Chinese in other directions.

The Medical Officer of Health and the Director of Public Works being experts cannot, by reason of an expert's training, be expected to regard questions of detail with an unbiased mind or with that liberal and comprehensive spirit that mark the good administrator such as I hope the new President will be. For this reason therefore neither of them should be heard by the Governor in Council without the President being also heard.

With a President such as I have pictured, the cheapest, quickest, most direct and most effective method of settling differences of opinion would be to submit the case through him to the Governor and I hope this method will be given a fair trial rather than burden appellants with the expense, trouble and delay of making application to the Law Courts; though I fully agree with Mr. Pollock and Mr. Slade that this would be preferable to the present arrangement.—Yours truly,

EDWARD OSBORNE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."]

Hongkong, 6th May 1908.

SIR,—The letter addressed to you by Mr. Marcus Slade, on the subject of the new Ordinance, stated with cogency and clearness reasons in support of the contention that there is need of improvement in the provisions made for appeal against the decisions of the Building Authority. The existence of that need was referred to in Mr. Osborne's speech on the second reading of the Bill, when he urged that there should be some more simple form of procedure. To-day in your columns, he suggests one. He suggests that the President of the Sanitary Board should be the constituted advocate of the property owners' views in combating those of the Director of Public Works before the Governor in Council. At first sight, the simplicity of this method is calculated to prove attractive, but second thoughts suggest a twofold objection. In the first place it only applies to cases in which exemption has been refused. In such cases the new Ordinance provides that a first appeal shall be made to the Sanitary Board. Assuming a case in which this first appeal had failed, assuming, that is that the Sanitary Board had confirmed a decision of the Building Authority, it is difficult to see how the arrangement could be relied upon to work satisfactorily from the property owners' point of view. The President of the Board, possibly agreeing with, possibly having stated his agreement with, a majority of members in upholding the Building Authority's decision, would hardly be an ideal advocate for the appellant. Even if possessed of a high character for impartiality and therefore to be trusted in stating the case against himself, the fact that he condemned the arguments which it would be his duty to advance would hardly tend to give them weight, and in the event of an appeal thus put forward being dismissed, the property owner would hardly feel secure in the belief that his case had been adequately represented. On the contrary it is at least probable that the landlord would prefer to be present himself or in the person of a representative. This the amending Ordinance provides for, as it is, but the wording does not indicate that he will be allowed to argue his case. The owner or his representative is merely permitted to be present. To remedy this by enabling cases to be argued before the Governor in Council is the first important suggestion made by Mr. Slade. It would seem only just that opportunity should be granted not only for stating a case but also for hearing and answering objections raised against it. Any system which retains to the Director of Public Works the last word in secret conclave places the appellant at a serious disadvantage. At the same time Mr. Slade points out that even if this concession were made there would still remain the importance of publicity being given to the proceedings. The argument in favour of making known, in some form accessible to the public, the reasons for decisions arrived at with regard to claims for exemption is based on a very real need for precedents enabling property owners to gain some fairly definite idea of what they may expect under given conditions. An intolerable hardship would arise if the power of granting exemptions were to be exercised in a capricious manner and even the existence of uncertainty constitutes a genuine grievance.

Mr. Osborne's remedy does not touch this grievance, as far as I understand his letter. Nor, and this is the second objection to it, does it hold out any remedy in cases of dispute over the interpretation of the Ordinance. In the majority of such cases the new proposals would have the effect of doing away with all possibility of obtaining redress against faulty readings of the law. Herein is felt to be another grievance, the removal of which is the aim of Mr. Pollock's proposal. That proposal is based upon the idea that by creating a body of precedents the meaning of doubtful sections would in course of time be made plain. There is an objection to making appeal easy if by so doing cases will be multiplied but the present suggestion would seem to hold out a hope of ultimately reducing the number.

There are thus seen to be two distinct points at issue; exemption on one hand; interpretation

on the other; with some simple form of appeal needed for both. It is the earnest hope of many who, like myself, support the main principles of the Bill that the Government will find a means of removing this flaw. Otherwise there will be failure to secure that absence of friction in its operation, the attainment of which is one of the avowed objects of the Government.—Yours etc.

M. STEWART.

NEW PUBLIC HEALTH AND BUILDINGS BILL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."]

Hongkong, 6th May 1908.

SIR,—The suggestion made by Hon. Mr. Pollock, K.C., during the debate on the second reading of the Bill now before the Legislative Council that a proviso be added enabling parties dissatisfied with the rulings of the Building Authority or Sanitary Board to have recourse by a simple mode of procedure to the Supreme Court is one of so just a nature and would I believe be so acceptable to the Community that the Government should not for a moment demur to its enactment.

Prior to the passing of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance No. 1 of 1903 the right of appeal Hon. Mr. Pollock asks for actually existed as enacted by Ordinance No. 15 of 1889.

Section 87. "Whenever any person shall be dissatisfied with the exercise of the discretion of the Surveyor General in respect of any act, matter, or thing, which is by this Ordinance made subject to his discretion, the person so dissatisfied may in lieu of reverting to any legal remedy appeal to the Governor in Council who may make such order in respect thereof, as may be deemed expedient, and such order shall be final for all intents and purposes."

I therefore think if this Section were re-enacted it will do away with any suggestion that the aggrieved party was driven to any expense on account of appeal, because if he so approved he could appeal to the Governor in Council in lieu of going to the Law Courts.

Yours faithfully,

A. SHELTON HOOPER.

THE ANTI-OPIMUM CRUSADE.

Of the many agitations which flourish at Home the one which has the greatest interest for us in Hongkong is the anti-opium crusade, and now it looks as if that movement has reached its culminating point, and that the objects which the organisations have in view are to be realised. The edict of the Imperial Government for the closing of "opium dens" in Hongkong has been issued. It has been in the hands of his Excellency for several days, and though nothing has been given to the public from official sources we know authoritatively that the news given in Reuter's telegram is correct.

Naturally the question is a serious one for Hongkong. The sentimentalists at Home have their particular views inflamed by exaggerated stories. Undoubtedly men smoke opium to excess and dream their lives away. Undoubtedly scenes are witnessed in opium dens which are not particularly edifying. But the same can be said regarding liquor and public houses, and yet the wholesale suppression of the manufacture of intoxicants and the wholesale closing of public-houses is not advocated except by fanatics whose extreme views exclude them from consideration, and so it is that sentimentalists have brought about a result regarding which there has not been much forethought. The practical aspects of the question have not been fully considered. It goes without saying that the opportunities for smoking cannot be stopped without inflicting much loss and hardship, and that large sums will have to be paid in compensation, because confiscation cannot be tolerated by an ultra-moral people. Moreover the opium trade cannot be suppressed without attacking vested interests and without dealing a blow at trade which is likely to seriously affect the interests of the Colony.

In the first place the Opium Farmer will consider the closing of the opium divan a

breach of the agreement and seek compensation from the Hongkong Government. The divan keepers will also require to be met with compensation. Secondly the loss of revenue to the Colony by the extinction or reduced value of the opium monopoly will involve increased taxation. But that is not all. The closing of about 200 shops will cause a slump in the property market. Rents will fall but taxation will have to be increased to maintain the revenue. Thus it will be seen that the question is a very serious one and residents in the Colony will await with interest the decision of the Government which has to face this difficult financial problem.

That some such result has long been anticipated is generally well known, and it is significant to refer to the notification published in the *Government Gazette* of 18th August, 1906, which states:

No. 710.—It is hereby notified that His Excellency the Governor-in-Council has been pleased to amend the Form of Grant of the Hongkong Opium Farm, published in Government Notification No. 439 of the 23rd May, 1906, by adding the following provisos:—

"Provided always that in the event of the exportation of Raw Opium from India being so restricted during the term hereby granted, as in the opinion of the Governor-in-Council seriously to affect the business of the Grantee, the onus of proof whereof shall rest on the Grantee, the Governor-in-Council upon the application of the Grantee, shall reduce the rent payable under this Grant to such an extent or may modify the terms of this Grant in such other manner as to the Governor-in-Council may seem equitable.

"Provided also that in the event of the exportation of Raw Opium from India being prohibited during the term hereby granted and the Grantee not being able to procure sufficient opium for boiling the Grantee may give notice to the Governor-in-Council of his desire to surrender this Grant, and, if, in the opinion of the Governor-in-Council such prohibition seriously affects the business of the Grantee, the onus of proof whereof shall rest on the Grantee, the Governor-in-Council shall thereupon, or so soon thereafter as he may deem desirable cancel the same. Nothing in the two preceding provisos is to be taken to mean that an alteration in the quantity of opium exported from India is to be accepted as *prima facie* evidence that the Farmer is entitled to a reduction of rent or to a modification of the terms of this Grant."

It is interesting to note the progress made with regard to the prohibition policy in India. On the 10th March Mr. O. Grady asked in the House of Commons whether, in view of the fact that the export of Bengal opium had fallen from 53,583 chests in 1906-7 to 48,000 in 1907-8 and the further fact that the area of cultivation had extended from 553,697 acres in the former period to 562,500 acres in the last year quoted he could inform the House whether the resulting crops of such extended area was or would be exported to other countries than China, or whether the habit of opium consumption was growing among the peoples of India, and that such extended area of cultivation was to meet such home demand; and, if so, whether steps would be taken drastically to reduce the area of cultivation below that of 1906-7.

Mr. Morley replied: There has been no extension of the area under poppy. The standard or maximum area fixed for regulating the grant, of licences to cultivate was fixed for 1906-7 at 594,000 acres. The area actually harvested in that year was 553,697 acres. For 1907-8 the standard area was reduced, to 562,500 acres. The actual area, when returned, will prove to be below this figure. For 1908-9 the standard area has again been reduced to 509,000 acres. I am afraid the drastic reduction demanded by my hon. friend would hardly extend employment.

During the current year the Finance Member of the Indian Viceroy's Council has allowed in his financial statement for a decline of £380,000 in the current year's revenue from opium.

Mr. Chan Kai Ming, the Secretary of the Opium Farm, was seen by our representative with reference to the telegram. He said that he had received no communication from the Government yet, and in reply to questions he said if their revenue was reduced they would have to seek compensation.

THE JAPANESE DISASTER.

We have received copies of the correspondence that has passed between His Excellency the Governor and the Japanese Consul, relative to the sinking of the 'Matsushima.'

Letter, dated 2nd May, from His Excellency the Governor to Mr. S. Mashiko.

"DEAR SIR,—I write to express to you my great regret at the news which I have seen in the papers of the loss of the cruiser 'Matsushima,' which was so recently a visitor in this Port, when I had the opportunity of meeting her gallant officers.

Our British Navy has also lately had several serious losses, so that we are allies in misfortune.

I earnestly hope that when we receive fuller news we may hear that there has been no great loss of life."—Yours very truly,

(Sd.) F. D. LUGARD.

Letter, dated 2nd May, from the Japanese Consul to His Excellency the Governor.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I beg to tender my sincere thanks for your kindness in sending Captain Taylor to this Consulate to express Your Excellency's sympathy on the accident to the cruiser 'Matsushima.'

I am pleased to inform Your Excellency that I telegraphed immediately to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, expressing Your Excellency's cordial sympathy."—Yours very truly,

(Sd.) SAIZO MASHIKO.

Letter, dated 4th May, from the Japanese Consul to the A.D.C., Government House.

"DEAR CAPTAIN,—I have received a telegram from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, and beg to enclose you a copy of the above."—Yours truly,

(Sd.) SAIZO MASHIKO.

(Copy of telegram.)

"On the 30th April, at 4.8 a.m., one of the Japanese training squadron, the 'Matsushima,' sank in a few moments while anchoring at a port in the Pescadores, owing to the explosion of the after magazine, only four metres of the funnel being seen on the water at full tide.

According to the investigation up to noon of May 2nd, 3 officers, 24 midshipmen, 7 semi-officers and other crew numbering 205, were saved. The bodies of the Captain, one officer, 27 midshipmen, one semi-officer and 39 crew were found, but those of 21 officers, 6 midshipmen and 111 crew are still missing.

Being prevented by the extent of the wreckage, it is very difficult for divers to discover the bodies."

Letter, dated 5th May, from the A.D.C., Government House, to Mr. Mashiko.

"DEAR MR. MASHIKO,—I am in receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, enclosing copy of a telegram from your Minister for Foreign Affairs with regard to the 'Matsushima' catastrophe, which I have submitted to the Governor. His Excellency desires me to express to you his great grief at the terrible nature of the disaster and his profound sympathy for the relatives of those who have perished."—Yours very sincerely,

(Sd.) P. H. MITCHELL TAYLOR.

A couple of weeks ago, the *Tatung Pao*, of Peking, published a telegram from its Shanghai Correspondent to the effect that the Chinese merchants there were holding meetings secretly. The object was to retaliate upon foreigners for the disuse of Chinese bank-notes in payment of Municipal taxes etc. within the limit of the International settlement; now it is reported in the local native journals that the T'uchihpu (Ministry of Finance) has telegraphed to the Viceroy and Governors of the various Provinces stating that the cause which led to unusual tightness of the money market in every part of China is attributable partly to the use of bank notes in the interior of the Provinces; and as the circulation of foreign notes concerns the financial position of China, some means must be provided to check it. Thus the Viceroy and Governors, have been advised to deprecate the use of foreign bank-notes outside the limits of the foreign Concessions at the various Treaty Ports.

REGISTRAR GENERAL'S REPORT.

The report of the Registrar General for the year 1907, laid before the Legislative Council by Command of His Excellency the Governor, last week, states:

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

The revenue collected during the year amounted to \$163,261.13, a sum \$14,023.08 below the revenue collected in 1906. The estimated revenue for the year was \$156,180; the principal items in which the estimate was exceeded were hawkers' licences, money changers' licences and householders' registration. Reference is made to these increases below. The revenue from markets fell short of the estimate by \$3,000.

The only material decrease in the revenue compared with that for 1906 is under the head Boat Licences. In 1906 the revenue from these licences was something over \$24,000. It is now collected by the Harbour Master. There were substantial increases under the heads hawkers' licences, money changers' licences, householders' registration and markets. The number of hawkers' licences issued increased from 14,65 in 1906 to 15,193.

| | First half- year ending 31st March, 1907. | Second half- year ending 30th Septem- ber 1907. |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| New Licences issued, | 7,116 | 3,638 |
| Licences renewed, ... | ... | 4,159 |
| Total, ... | 7,116 | 7,797 |

An increase of 50 per cent. in the revenue from money changers' licences is due no doubt to the great discount at which the silver subsidiary coinage stood for a part of the year. The inclusion of the Kowloon Peninsula in that part of the Colony to which Part III of Ordinance No. 3 of 1888, providing for the registration of householders, applies, accounts for the comparatively large sum received under the heading householders' registration. The increase in the revenue from markets is a little over one per cent. and is fairly evenly distributed.

It is satisfactory to find that the rents for the stalls in the Mongkoktsui Market are maintained at the level at which they stood twelve months ago; the market evidently meets a want. The Des Vœux Road Market has not been hitherto a great success but for some reason the market people turned their attention to it in November and all the market is now fully let at the rate of \$1,366 a year, a low rent it is true, but an increase of 30 per cent. on the rent received in 1906. As I stated in last year's report the accommodation for the poultry dealers in the New Western Market was found insufficient and two dealers have been given permission to move into premises outside the market. The Old Western Market has been opened out by the removal of unnecessary stalls and the remainder of the premises has been divided between the butchers and vegetable and fruit dealers. The arrangements were completed on the 15th October.

Of the total revenue by the Registrar General's Department in 1907, 67 per cent. came from the rent of market premises, and 18 per cent. from fees for hawkers' licences.

The total expenditure during the year was \$35,630.88 compared with \$33,947.49 in 1906. The expenditure in 1906 was increased by the Census. The actual expenditure fell short of the estimated expenditure by \$2,701.11. The principal items in which the expenditure was below the estimate were personal emoluments, census and rent of quarters for student-interpreters.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

The number of women detained under warrant was 139 compared with 160 in 1906.

It is satisfactory to find that the percentage of cases in which after examination at the Po Leung Kuk, no grounds can be found for detention, has fallen as low as 28. To send 800 women to the Po Leung Kuk in one year throws a very great deal of work on the directors and puts severe strain on the resources and accommodation of the institution, whilst it is unpleasant to find that in 400 cases the detention was not justified. On the other hand it may be

that during the last year, too many doubtful cases have been permitted to pass. It is very hard in this business to strike the mean.

In all, 316 persons were admitted to the Po Leung Kuk, 16 being runaway maidservants. In the case of maidservants wherever there is evidence of ill-treatment the Police are asked to prosecute, but even in cases of ill treatment the fault is probably not all on one side. The schools to which these children are sent find them as a class unsatisfactory and hard to manage. The numbers of girls added during the year to the list of those required under bond to report themselves regularly to the Registrar General was twelve. Sixty-six girls were reported to the Po Leung Kuk as being missing in Hongkong during 1907 and of these only nine were reported to have been recovered.

Five persons were sent to the Italian Convent during the year and twelve to Miss Eyre's Refuge, and of these four were sent under warrant, two to each institution. Both institutions have been visited by me more than once during the year, and Miss Eyre's Refuge was also visited by some of the directors of the Po Leung Kuk. At a final inspection made at the close of the year only one complaint was made. The girls both at the Refuge and at the Convent looked clean, healthy and happy. The Sisters tell me that they have now no trouble with the girls and that they will be willing to receive any more who can be sent to them. Two of the girls who have been married happened to be in the Convent at the time of my last visit: they were well-dressed and seemed happy.

EMIGRATION.

The examination of females and children under 16 is conducted by the Assistant Registrar General and occupied about 156 hours; this is exclusive of the time spent by the Registrar General in re-examining doubtful cases. The number of women and children examined was 15,571, the examination is therefore conducted at the rate of about 101 emigrants the hour. This rate of speed may seem to be excessive and to give little opportunity for ascertaining the actual status of the emigrants but as a matter of fact in the case of eighty per cent. no examination is called for, only identification. There are very rarely any grounds for suspicion in the case of single women over 30, and of women and children going in families.

Male emigration has been very carefully supervised during the year. A number of ships taking third class passengers to the Straits Settlements have been inspected, and from the 1st November the emigration of labourers has been satisfactorily supervised by the adoption of measures agreed upon at a conference held in March with Mr. Barnes, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs in the Straits Settlements. A probable change in the Emigration Law was foreshadowed by me in my annual report for 1905, but it was decided to take no steps until an opportunity had been given of discussing the whole question in personal conference with some officer from the Straits Settlements. This opportunity occurred in March last when Mr. Barnes passed through the Colony and an arrangement was come to, by which no immigrant to the Straits Settlement from Hongkong would be permitted to enter into a labour contract unless he had appeared before the Registrar General before embarkation.

It is too soon to say what effect the new arrangement will have on the volume of emigration, but everything so far has worked smoothly. The examining officer has detected a number of cases of misrepresentation and fraud, and has rejected a number of youths and men physically unfit for work at the mines. This Office is in constant communication with the Protectorate of Chinese in Singapore and it is hoped that with a little more experience all but a few cases of fraud will be eliminated. A number of Chinese gentlemen who have served as members of the Board of Direction of the Po Leung Kuk have undertaken to inspect the emigrants when they present themselves for examination, and they commenced their duties at the beginning of 1908. There is no doubt that their assistance will be of the greatest value.

During the year, 51 hotel licences and 34 emigration-house licences were issued. The boarding-houses are those which are made use

of by "assisted emigrants." Hotels are patronised not only by intending emigrants but by visitors to Hongkong—both men and women.

Since 1905 the accommodation provided in hotels has increased 34 per cent. and that in boarding-houses 100. Two boarding-house licences have been cancelled for misbehaviour on the part of the keepers. In the one case a man had been induced to go on board by fraud and left overboard, in the other an unwilling emigrant was prevented from leaving the house.

Enquiries have been made in several cases for relatives who had gone to the Straits Settlements or to Borneo, and the missing men have been traced with the help of the records kept by the boarding-houses. In most instances the relatives have repaid, sometimes with the assistance of this office, the advances made to the emigrant; in some they have been content with an interchange of letters.

It is pleasant to learn that the efforts made in Hongkong to stop emigration abuses are recognised elsewhere than in the Colony.

REGULATION OF CHINESE.

By an Order-in-Council dated the 2nd April, 1907, the provisions of Part III of the Ordinance were extended to the urban part of the Kowloon peninsula. In May, circulars were sent to landlords and householders calling their attention to the law, and by the end of the year, 1,783 houses out of 1,913 had been registered. The work of registration entailed the engagement of two temporary clerks for six months.

The balance to the credit of the District Watchmen's Fund on the 31st December was \$12,900 as against \$10,276 for the preceding year. Contributions show an increase of \$690, expenditure a decrease of \$881. There was no expenditure on building in 1907, but in 1908 it will become necessary to increase the accommodation in the District Watchmen's House at West Point. The Procession which was held in December necessitated the engagement of Special Watchmen and entailed an expenditure of \$1,100. Effect was also given to a resolution of the Board passed some time ago and the three Watchmen's Houses and the Registrar General's Office were placed on the Telephone Exchange. The increase in the Force during the last few years has been as follows:—

| 31st December, 1901 | 70 District Watchmen of all ranks. |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1903 | 82 |
| 1904-1907 | 95 |

The nature and number of permits issued during the year were as follows:—

| | |
|---|-----|
| To fire crackers for marriages | 286 |
| " " on other occasions, ... | 110 |
| | 396 |
| To hold processions ... | 30 |
| To perform (in other than per- | |
| theatricals) (in permanent buildings) ... | 51 |
| To hold religious ceremonies | 4 |
| Total, ... | 568 |

Permits to hold religious ceremonies and theatrical performances in the New Territories North of the Kowloon Range are issued by the Assistant Superintendent of Police at Taiipo.

The holding of theatrical performances in a temporary building in connection with a temple festival is of regular occurrence. The trustees of the temple invite tenders for the provision of a performance and the successful tenderer provides the theatrical company, builds as large a matchshed as he thinks will be profitable and fills it as full as it can hold with seats. As is known the result in China is sometimes disastrous. To remove as far as possible the chance of such a catastrophe in Hongkong all applications for permits are to be accompanied in future by a sketch of the matchshed, in order that the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade may see that there are adequate exits and gangways.

The number of marriages solemnized during the year was 137, as compared with 125 in 1906. Twenty-seven marriages were contracted at the Registrar General's Office.

286 permits were issued to fire crackers on the occasion of Chinese marriages, as against 225 in 1906.

The Births registered during the year were as follows:—

| | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|--------------|--------|----------|--------|
| Chinese,... | 736 | 388 | 1,124 |
| Non-Chinese, | 161 | 135 | 296 |
| | 897 | 523 | 1,420 |

Four hundred and eighty-two births were registered during the year in the West Point and East Point registration offices in Victoria, an increase of 66 on the number registered in 1906. The total number also of Chinese births registered in Victoria shows a satisfactory increase.

The number of deaths registered during year was:—

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Chinese, | 6,999 |
| Non-Chinese, | 287 |
| Total, | 7,286 |

Two hundred and ninety-nine permits were issued to exhume human remains for removal to China or for reburial in the Colony. Four hundred and forty-one certificates were issued by the Police for removal of bodies from the Colony.

VACCINATION.

The total number of vaccinations recorded is 7,420 compared with 7,450 in 1906. The record includes only vaccinations performed at the hospitals and dispensaries and by the hospital and dispensary vaccinators. An increase is shown in the vaccinations at Hung-hom, Kowloon City and Yau-mati. The returns from the villages show an improvement. At Yau-mati and Shau-kiwan however the percentage of vaccinations to births is not yet as high as it ought to be.

REGISTRATION OF BOOKS.

Fifty-three books were registered during the year, compared with sixty-five in 1906.

COPYRIGHT IN WORKS OF THE FINE ARTS

Two sets of photographs and one "Map and Wall Directory of Hongkong Central" were registered during the year.

CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY TO CHINESE ENTERING THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ETC.

The number of certificates issued during the years 1906 and 1907 was:—

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| To the United States,... | 1 | 7 |
| " Hawaiian Islands, ... | ... | ... |
| " Philippines, | 2 | ... |
| | 3 | 7 |

The issue of these certificates is now confined to Chinese who are British Subjects resident in Hongkong.

GENERAL.

In deference to the wishes of the Chinese merchants who do business with Canton it has been decided to continue to license the Postal Hongs which carry letters between Hongkong and that port. These Hongs are of very great service to the business community; they afford special facilities for despatching correspondence and deliver it quickly and safely.

A petition which received very influential support was presented in August, 1906, complaining of the way in which the Excise Officers of the Opium Farm conducted searches of private premises and the examination of passengers and their baggage on their arrival in the Colony: attention was also invited to the prevalence of the practice of "planting" opium by informers. Petitioners made various suggestions which were adopted in all essential particulars.

A list of the Chinese names of islands, bays, hills and passes in Hongkong and the New Territories to which English names have been affixed was taken in hand and is now being printed.

There does not appear to have been any serious trade dispute during the year. The junks employed in the carriage of timber to Canton took advantage of the scarcity of suitable junks after the typhoon, to try and increase their

charges above the fixed rates, and timber merchants were put to some difficulty for a short time in securing carriage.

The Chinese firms dealing in the export of Chinese clothing and eatables to the Transvaal complained of the high rate at which their goods were assessed for payment of import duty, and representations were made on their behalf to the Transvaal Government.

A project which first started three years ago for the incorporation of the Man Mo Temple seems likely now to be carried out. A Bill has been submitted by the Trustees of the Temple property for the approval of the Government and is now under consideration.

The Directors of the Tung Wa Hospital who act as managers of the Temple have also been granted a lease of a piece of land behind the Temple. This land was given to the Man Mo Temple in the year 1877 and has since been regarded by the directors as its property, but no lease had ever been granted.

A dispute as to the management of temple property at Shamshuipo was referred to the Registrar General, and settled by him with the assistance of two Chinese gentlemen. The property consists of a market and a wharf and the dispute originated in a struggle for the control of the property between the Puntel and the Hakka inhabitants of the village.

A petition to which 322 chops were affixed was received in March from the inhabitants of Yau-mati. Petitioners complained of the increase in the ferry fare to Hongkong and wished to start a public ferry to be controlled by the community. What may be called a municipal pier exists at Shamshuipo—one of the conditions of the lease being that the pier is to be managed by the lessee to the satisfaction of the Registrar General, who will be guided in his decision by the wishes of the inhabitants of the village. The Government decided to put the pier site up to auction in the usual way.

During the winter of 1906-1907 well-substantiated stories reached me of the blackmailing of Chinese by a man who posed as Lan Kwang, a notorious brigand in the Heungshan district. The man could not be traced, as he carried on his business with great discretion, but he at last committed an error of judgment in attempting to blackmail Mr. Tsui See-ting who knocked him down and marched him a mile to the nearest police station.

The activity of the Botanical and Forestry Department in protecting plantations led in March to the receipt of numerous petitions from the Kowloon District on behalf of the wood-cutters. As a result further action was suspended pending investigation. In the country districts the principal fuel is dry grass and during the year it was found necessary to warn the villagers of Little Hongkong that grass-cutting was not permitted in plantations or in the natural forest.

On the advice of Mr. Lockhart and Dr. Ho Kai, a Chinese Illustrated Encyclopedia (古今圖書集成) has been bought for the Office Library. This work was first published under Imperial Authority in 1726 and a new edition has been lately brought out in Shanghai.

A Chinese procession—the first of its kind since March, 1874—was held on the 5th, 6th and 7th of December. It attracted a great number of people to the Colony but the large crowds were quite orderly and there was no increase of crime. The committee of management were able to hand over \$12,800—the unexpended balance of subscriptions, to charitable purposes.

The homeward bound German mail on May 4th had on board a distinguished passenger in the person of Sir Robert Hart, the Inspector General of Customs who is going to England on a holiday which is expected to end in his retiring from the position which he has filled so ably. The "York" reached port about six o'clock and Captain Taylor, A.D.C. to H.E. the Governor, went on board as representing Sir Frederick Lugard with an offer of entertainment which Sir Robert declined on the score of ill-health. Mr. Parr, Commissioner of Chinese Customs in Hongkong, and Mr. T. E. Cocker, Deputy Commissioner, also called on Sir Robert Hart.

ITALIAN CONVENT.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS.

The Italian Convent, which plays an important part in the social economy of Hongkong more particularly in the religious and educational side, may fairly claim some little attention at the present time when it is celebrating the centenary of the founding of the Institution to which it belongs. The Canossian Sisters of Charity, though one of the youngest of the many orders developed by the religious zeal of the sons and daughters of the Roman Catholic Church, is one of the most effective organisations that have emanated from Italy. Its success, which has been so remarkable in Hongkong, is largely due to the fact that the devoted sisters, who give their life so ungrudgingly to the cause which they love, do not confine their labours to religious spheres but undertake the care of foundlings and orphans and educate and train the young into intelligent citizens.

The Institution owes its origin to the daughter of one of Italy's most noble houses, Magdalen, the Marchioness of Canossa, who was born in Verona on the 8th May, 1774. She founded the Institution of the Sisters of Charity in her own country on the 5th May, 1808, and during her lifetime she opened five convents where she placed sisters who were willing to give themselves up to the sacred cause of charity. She died on the 10th April, 1835, at the age of 61, in the first convent which she established. This convent, which was dedicated to St. Joseph, was the gift of the great Emperor of the French, Napoleon Bonaparte. There are now in Italy 115 convents, and quite a large number are found in other parts of the world.

In 1860 six sisters came from Italy to Hongkong and the small beginnings of that little band has resulted in the establishment of the large institution in Caine Road and its various agencies throughout the Colony. A small house was rented for them in Caine Road, and there they started their good work. With the growth of the Colony the scope of their labour was extended, and as their efforts became known they were appreciated. Sympathisers assisted them, and little by little the institution grew until it reached its present proportions. In addition to the Convent in Caine Road, it has under its aegis St. Francis School at Wanchai, St. Mary's School at Kowloon, the home for foundlings at West Point, and Chinese Schools at Shau-kiwan, Yau-mati, Hung-hom and Aberdeen, besides homes for foundlings at Namtau and Sambue. The last mentioned was only opened six months ago and it has already received 107 babies, 64 of whom are living and well. In the words of the Mother Superior "we have 800 mouths to feed every day, that is including our branches. In the Convent alone there are 500. There are about 60 sisters, 60 boarders, and the remainder are destitutes and orphans. We have now 200 day scholars."

With regard to the personnel of the Institution it is interesting to note that one of the six sisters who laid its foundation in Hongkong is still alive and well. Despite her 75 years, sister Maria Stella is very active, and looks well after her 43 years' residence in the East. The first novice received by the Sisters was the daughter of Sir John Bowring, then Governor of Hongkong. Most of the sisters to-day are Italian, but their number includes Portuguese, Spanish and German.

The institution now comprises schools, hospitals and homes for foundlings, and its work is necessarily on a very large scale.

The Sisters of Charity are now represented in Hankow, Hunan and Shanai, while convents have been established in Macao, Timor, Singapore, Malacca and India.

The centenary celebrations begin to-day with services in the Convent Church. There is a sermon in Chinese to-day, another in Portuguese on Sunday, and a third in English on Monday. On Tuesday there will be high mass in the morning and at night the convent building will be illuminated in honour of the historical occasion.

SUPREME COURT.

Friday, 1st May.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE MR. H. H. J. GOMPERTZ
(ACTING PUISNE JUDGE).

CLAIM UNDER A WILL.

Mr. Edmund Hamilton Sharp, at present residing at Banff in British Columbia, and Sir Catchick Paul Chater, Kt., C.M.G., of No. 5, Queen's Road Central, the present Trustees of the will of the late Mr. Granville Sharp, claimed from Tsang Keng, contractor, the sum of \$873.33, being arrears of interest due under a covenant in a mortgage deed dated the 18th day of May 1903, whereby the defendant covenanted that if he did not repay to Edmund Hamilton Sharp and one James Buchanan (the then trustees of the aforementioned will), the principal sum of \$32,000 with interest thereon, at the rate of 7 per cent per annum on May 18, 1906, he would thereafter, so long as the principal sum should remain unpaid, pay to the trustees by equal monthly payments, interest on the said principal at the rate of 7 per cent. Mr. Jackson, of Messrs Johnson, Stokes and Master, appeared for the claimant. After hearing evidence, his Honour reserved judgment in order that claimants might produce the mortgage deed.

Monday, 4th May.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE THE CHIEF JUSTICE (SIR
F. PIGGOTT).

A LIBEL ACTION.

The Tso Tsui Wo Company, carrying on business at 107 Connaught Road Central, brought an action for \$10,000 against the proprietors printers and publishers of the Chinese newspaper the Sai Kung Yik Po, for alleged libel, the libel consisting of a statement appearing in an article published in the newspaper charging the plaintiffs with having been associated with lawless characters in Manila.

Sir Henry Berkeley, K.C., instructed by Mr. Otto Kong Sing, appeared for the plaintiffs; and Mr. M. Slade instructed by Mr. Steavenson, of Messrs Deacon, Looker and Deacon, appeared for defendants.

The statement of claim stated that plaintiffs were merchants and carrying on business at No. 147, Connaught Road Central. The defendant was the proprietor, printer and publisher of the newspaper known as the Sai Kung Yik Po. The plaintiffs had for many years carried on business in Hongkong and are well known as the Tso Tsui Wo foreign goods firm. On the 5th, 6th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 20th days respectively of February, 1907, the defendants falsely and maliciously printed and published in the said newspaper a certain libellous article in the Chinese language referring to the plaintiffs firm. The words translated into English mean and were understood by those who published them to mean "if there are such things how can he seize the company's property as his own property; the Tso Yuen Hop are celebrated persons in the commercial circles of Manila; besides the branch shop Tsoi Wo Leung they also have established in Hongkong the Tso Tsui foreign goods firm. It cannot be said that they are rich persons and yet they have done such an act: It is not that owing to there being a great profit their greedy mouth is watered for it as if it were watered for rain. It is not that they look strong in their outward appearance but are dried up internally, and as they find it unable to pay out the aforesaid amount they have compelled to do such an act. Recently we have seen their correspondence published in a Hongkong paper giving false allegations regarding the matter and we therefore give a little explanation here and make all our villagers and relations in the island know that between heaven and earth (i.e. the universe) there are such unjust and lawless characters." The defendant alleged that Tso Hang Leung was a member of a firm in Manila known as the Tso

Yuen Hop who had absconded and had in concert with certain persons described in the article as unjust and lawless characters defrauded a certain company in Manila, and that the Tso Yuen Hop had established a branch firm in Hongkong known as the Tso Tsui Wo foreign goods shop, meaning that the plaintiffs had been associated in business with persons who were lawless characters.

The defendants replied that the article was sent to the newspaper by certain persons who had signed their names thereto, and the defendants were ready to publish an apology. Plaintiff had really suffered no loss nor injury and defendants had paid \$500 in Court as sufficient to meet any loss the plaintiffs may have suffered.

Sir Henry argued that as the defendants had paid \$500 into Court the libel was admitted and it followed that plaintiffs were entitled to damages. The only question for the court therefore was the quantum.

Evidence was called in support of plaintiff's claim, and the case adjourned.

Tuesday, 5th April.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
(SIR F. PIGGOTT).

"CRIMINAL CONVERSATION" ACTION.

Judgment was delivered in the action brought by Thomas Alexander Mitchell against John Lemm for damages for criminal conversation arising out of the divorce proceedings in the Court of Session, Edinburgh, where the plaintiff obtained decree against his wife. The Hon. Mr. H. E. Pollock, K.C., instructed by Mr. Steavenson, of Messrs Deacon, Looker and Deacon, appeared for the plaintiff and Mr. M. Slade, instructed by Mr. J. Scott Harston, appeared for the defendant.

His Lordship said,—"This action is for, as it is called in law, 'Criminal Conversation,' alleged to have been committed by the defendant with the wife of the plaintiff in this Colony. The defendant has raised a preliminary point of law to the effect that this Court has no jurisdiction to entertain the action. As a matter of fact the plaintiff has obtained a decree of divorce against his wife in the Scotch Courts for adultery, but this has no bearing on the point of law now raised. It is right for me to add that the defendant was not a party to the proceedings in Scotland; therefore, although I am bound to talk in this judgment of the defendant's adultery with the plaintiff's wife, it must not be taken to have been proved so far as the Court is concerned. Whether the plaintiff will be able to prove it, how far the judgment of the Scotch Court will help him, in judgment which may perhaps arise in the future I have nothing to do with now. I cannot, however, avoid alluding to it, because I cannot decide this question without dealing with one aspect of the case, in order to clear the ground of a curious, and so far as I know, novel point of law which I mentioned during the argument. Strictly speaking, it lies outside the scope of the argument on the point of law actually raised, and therefore cannot be said to have been fully argued. But if either party is dissatisfied with my opinion on this question, it may be raised for re-argument should the case any time hereafter come on for hearing. I deal with it now in order to clear my own mind of a question which might perhaps impede a clear appreciation of what is as complicated a tangle of legislation as I ever came across. The proceedings, familiarly known as the action for criminal conversation, are no more than, a common law action for a tort: adultery with a man's wife is a wrongful act for which an action for damages lies at the suit of the husband for the damage suffered by him—per quod consortium amisit. It is a transitory action, that is, it may be brought in any Court without whose jurisdiction the defendant may be found: the place of commission of the adultery is immaterial, though as a matter of fact the adultery in this case was alleged to have been committed in this Colony: but beyond the fact that

it makes this Colony the convenient forum, the question is irrelevant. Before the Divorce Act abolished the action for criminal conversation in England the action could have been brought there, although the adultery was committed in Hongkong. Now the divorce in this case was decreed in Scotland: I have not the Scotch Act before me but for the purpose of what I am going to say I am going to assume that the divorce was decreed in England under the Divorce Act of 1875. Now that Act by section 59 destroyed the action for criminal conversation in England and substituted for it a power for the divorce Court to award damages against a co-respondent on the same principle that as would have been awarded in the action for criminal conversation either on the petition for divorce or on a petition limited to such act either of which petitions is to be served on the wife on the alleged adulterer with power to this court to dispense with service or to direct the method of service. There seems to me to have been few cases in which the co-respondent has been abroad and so far as I can gather from the books it is an uncertain question whether the court has jurisdiction over a co-respondent whenever it has jurisdiction over the respondent or whether that is subject to the same rules as other actions against persons abroad that is to say that the case must be brought within Order XI. rule q (c) as relief against parties domiciled or usually resident in England. But I will assume, still on the hypothesis of the divorce proceedings having been in England, that the damages could have been pronounced against the defendant assuming him to have been guilty of adultery. With regard to section 53 it is to be observed in the first place that it by no means meets the whole case which results from the abolition of the action by section 59. For an action for criminal conversation could prior to 1857 have been brought in England for adultery committed abroad between parties over whom the Divorce Court has now no jurisdiction. Secondly, and this is material to the present action, I do not think it can be said that section 53 gives the Divorce Court an exclusive jurisdiction to pronounce a divorce. I assume for the purpose of what I am saying that the Scotch Divorce Court has a jurisdiction similar to the English Divorce Court. Now as the Scotch Court had jurisdiction to pronounce a divorce in this case the competence of this Court to entertain this action must depend on the fact that the Scotch Court had not exclusive jurisdiction in the matter of damages against the co-respondent, as in order that I may consider this question at all I must assume this. Against neither section 59 of the English Divorce Act nor any corresponding section in the Scotch Divorce Act has any application to the Colonies, therefore on fundamental principles action for criminal conversation committed anywhere and quite irrespective of any divorce proceedings begun or not begun elsewhere lies by the common law of England introduced into this Colony on 5th April 1843 by Ordinance 2 of 1846, always supposing the divorce court has not awarded damages against him when the question would have been already of course res judicata. I should add to what I have said already that it would not have been altogether an unreasonable thing to have created by Section 30 an exclusive jurisdiction over co-respondents in all cases where the Divorce Court has jurisdiction over the co-respondent. But all definition of jurisdiction was deliberately excluded from the Divorce Act, that being left to the common law, and if it had intended this even so far as the Colonies are concerned section 50 would have been drafted altogether differently. Therefore in a case where the matter has not already been dealt with in another Court in England or elsewhere the action for criminal conversation is part of the common law introduced into this Colony by the Ordinances of 1845 and 1846. I may here point out though I do not think anything in the following argument turns on it that there is no common law in this Colony but that the English common law was introduced by the above ordinances and is therefore strictly speaking a body of statutory law. This matter disposed of, come to the question directly raised by this point of law: has the action of

criminal conversation been expressly taken away whether by Ordinance or inferentially by a series of Ordinances? The first Act I have to look at is No. 5 of 1858, which introduced bodily certain English Acts into the Colony, among them certain sections of the Divorce Act, except in so far as they relate to dissolution of marriage. Among these sections are sections 33 and 59. Therefore, the action of criminal conversation was done away with altogether in this Colony and the limited power of awarding damages against co-respondents for adultery in suits for judicial separation, or in a petition limited to that object was granted to the Supreme Court in the same way as it had been granted to the Divorce Court when it was enacted in England. By No. 56 of 1860, this Ordinance was repealed in one short section. It, however, recited in the preamble that it was expedient and necessary to provide for the subjects dealt with in the same Act introduced by No. 5 of 1858 by distinct enactments; but so far as matrimonial jurisdiction is concerned this has never been done. We therefore get to this: The jurisdiction created in 1858 was abolished in 1860. But was the law which had been destroyed by the introduction of Section 59 of the Divorce Act revived? In other words, was the right to bring an action for criminal conversation brought into existence again? Now the principle of repeal is of course that it destroys. But when a repealing act is itself repealed the common law rule is that it revives what was destroyed before. This rule is very clearly stated in Maxwell (at p. 622), "Where an act is repealed, and the repealing enactment is repealed by another which manifests no intention that the first shall continue repealed, the common law rule was that the repeal of the second act revived the first, and revived it too, *ad initio*, and not merely from the passing of the reviving act." That this rule accords with common sense is manifested in its application to the present case. The action for criminal conversation existed in the Colony. In 1858 an English Act was introduced which among other things did away with the action; and two years after that act was itself repealed clearly because it was a very clumsy way of giving the Supreme Court a series of somewhat complicated jurisdictions. Whether the preamble exactly fitted the intention of the legislature is a matter which need not be inquired into. It remains only to say that the other Acts introduced by No. 5 of 1858 were replaced by special ordinances in the Colony, the Matrimonial Causes Act was not. It would be manifestly impossible to hold that there was no revival resulting from this repeal. Therefore, after No. 5 of 1858 came into operation, the criminal conversation was maintainable in the Colony. We then come to the Interpretation Ordinance of the Colony No. 8 of 1897, by sections 9 and 11 of which certain rules were laid down to the effect of repeals. These, as most of the other sections of the Ordinance, were based on the English interpretation Act of 1889. Now the English sections are as follows: "Section 11 which appears under the heading 'Re-enactment of the existing rules' provides that where an Act passed after the year 1850 whether before or after the commencement of this Act repeals a repealing enactment, it shall not be construed as reviving any enactment previously repealed unless words are added reviving that enactment. The reference to the year 1851 has a very definite meaning. The Statute 13 Vic. Chap. 21 for shortening the language used in Acts of Parliament contained in section 5 this same clause. The statement of the heading that the sections following and under it did re-enact 'existing rules of construction, had a definite meaning, and was in fact accurate. Now this becomes section 9 of the local Ordinance, and here also we have the heading 'Existing Rules of Construction.' There was an Interpretation Ordinance passed in 1867, No. 1 of that year, but it does not contain this clause. There was also a Repeal Explanatory Ordinance passed in 1895, No. 3 of that year, which, though in somewhat different language, contains the effect of this clause; and by section 4 this Ordinance was applied to Ordinances passed before as well as after the commencement of that Ordinance. The same remark applies to section 11 (which

is section 38 of the English Act), for that also in somewhat different language is to be found in No. 3 of 1895. The heading under which both sections 9 and 11 of No. 8 of 1897 come is therefore accurate. The rules of interpretation contained in them were, in fact, "Existing Rules of Construction," and I am therefore saved some rather difficult inquiries: what is the true legislative effect of sectional headings, which it appears is somewhat more extended than that of marginal notes; and then, what is the effect of an inaccurate heading, as this in the revised edition of the laws undoubtedly at first sight appeared to be. The problem is simplified to this extent, but the crudity of the legislation passed in 1895 remains, and it is about as crude a bit of legislation as it has ever been my fate to endeavour to construe. A retroactive effect is given to existing repealing laws. What they did do is suddenly undone, and undone retroactively. They did revive laws which had been repealed by the Ordinances themselves repealed. It is, many years afterwards, enacted that they did not revive those laws. What is to happen to rights acquired in the meantime under such legislation I have not the remotest idea, and in this case I need not speculate, for I have quite sufficiently serious consequences to deal with as it is. How the draftsman came to make the blunder I cannot understand. Section 11 of the English Act was not made retrospective, but was applied to Statutes passed since 1800, because they themselves were already all subject to this rule of construction. Section 38 was naturally only made applicable to future legislation. The corresponding sections of the local Ordinance are both made bodily retrospective. I cannot help myself, therefore, in coming to a decision in this case although it is manifestly contrary to common sense. The Courts are not allowed to interpret what has no need of interpretation. The legislature must be intended to mean what it has plainly expressed, and consequently, there is no room for construction. It matters not, in such a case, what the consequences may be. Where by the use of clear and unequivocal language, capable of only one meaning, anything is enacted by the legislature, it must be enforced, even though it is absurd or mischievous. If the words go beyond what was probably the intention, effect must, nevertheless be given to them. They cannot be construed, contrary to their meaning, as embracing or excluding cases merely because no good reason appears why they should be excluded or embraced. However unjust, arbitrary or inconvenient the intention conveyed may be, it must receive its full effect. When once the intention is plain, it is not the province of a Court to scan its wisdom or its policy. Its duty is not to make the law reasonable, but to expound it as it stands, according to the real sense of the words. There is much more in Maxwell to the same effect. I must not scan the wisdom of this enactment, but I may in unmistakable language declare its unwisdom. Therefore there is no mistake about it, the action of criminal conversation which had been revived in 1860, and which existed down to 1895, was destroyed in 1895 retroactively. Now the learned Attorney-General, if he reads this judgment, will, I make no doubt, immediately repeal this law, and re-enact it in proper language. And I have no hesitation in pointing to what would then happen: the action for criminal conversation would again come into existence in the Colony, and would further always have been in existence. I think I should take this opportunity of explaining the difference between section 11 and section 38 of the English Act. Section 11 is straight-forward; but the clause of section 38, which was also referred to as the counterpart of section 11 of the local Ordinance, is most complex in its wording. It provides that "where an Act repeals any other Enactment, then, unless the contrary appears, the repeal shall not revive anything not in force or existing at the time at which the repeal takes place."

The use of the double negative is puzzling, and suggests that an express revivor is contemplated. I think it is. Take the following case:—Assume an Act passed in 1858, repealed by another Act passed in 1860; but it is expressly

enacted that, say, section 3 is to continue in force. That section of the Act of 1858 then continues in force. Now the Act of 1860 is repealed in 1895; this repeal would destroy section 3 of 1858, which now exists in virtue of the Act of 1860. Therefore comes this provision and says the repeal of the Act of 1860 is to revive section 3 of 1858: revive is used, because the repeal of the Act of 1860, has in fact destroyed it. But there is another question raised. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court is by section 7 of 3 of 1873 declared to be the jurisdiction of the English Courts of Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer. Now here is another legislative pit-fall straight in the way of the unwary litigant. This is merely repeating an existing provision; but it is in the form of a re-enacting clause, and it is quite possible to contend that the date at which the jurisdiction is to be ascertained in 1873, there is a proper form of words where you want to continue as well as to re-enact which avoids all difficulties. But this question does not arise, because the answer to the argument of the defendant on this point is much simpler than I at first thought. It is said that the effect of section 49 of the Divorce Act was to remove criminal conversation actions from the jurisdiction of the Common Law Courts; and therefore as these Courts had not got that jurisdiction in 1873 this Court has not got it. I do not think that the question is one either of competence or jurisdiction. The action is simply destroyed. When you say that a Court has no jurisdiction to try an action that means that the action is an existent action, one which may be brought somewhere. But where the action has been destroyed that is an end of the matter: the Court would be competent to entertain it if it existed, only it does not exist. I do not think therefore that the question before me is affected by section 7 of the Supreme Court Ordinance of 1873. The result of this painfully tedious argument is that this action, in virtue of the retroactive operation of section 9 of the Interpretation Ordinance, has not been revived by the repeal of No. 5 of 1858 by No. 5 of 1860. Without expressing the slightest opinion on the merits of the case, and regarding it as I am bound to regard it as an action brought to vindicate any other alleged infringement of right, I can only say that the result is ludicrous. But the defendant's point is well taken and must prevail, and though I have given much thought to the question I feel that I cannot make any other than the usual order, and give judgment on the point of law raised by the defendant with costs. This has the effect of dismissing the action. But I think I am justified in expressing the hope that should the law on the question of repeals be put straight, and the action for criminal conversation thereupon revive, that no technical objection will be raised by the defendant to the revival of this action at the stage at which it has now reached.

A LIBEL ACTION.

The action by the Tsui Wo Company, carrying on business at 107 Connaught Road Central against the proprietors, printers, and publishers of the Chinese newspaper the Sai Kung Yik Po; for \$10,000 damages for alleged libel, the libel consisting of a statement appearing in an article published in the newspaper charging the plaintiffs with having been associated with lawless characters in Manila, was continued.

Si Henry Berkeley, K.C., instructed by Mr. Otto Kong Sing, appeared for the plaintiffs; and Mr. M. Slade, instructed by Mr. Stevenson, of Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon, appeared for defendants.

After hearing evidence, His Lordship gave judgment for \$500, the sum paid into Court, with costs.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE MR. H. H. J. GOMPERTZ (ACTING PUISNE JUDGE).

AN INTERESTING POINT.

The action in which Lo Leung otherwise Leung Tai Kon proceeded against the Tang Hung Yu otherwise Thong Hang Dye for the recovery of \$1,000 was called on. Mr. F. X. d'Almada e Castro appeared for plaintiff and Mr. E. J. Grist for defendants.

The statement of claim set forth:—(1) The plaintiff is a widow and resides No. 216 Des Vaux Road Central, Victoria. (2) The defendants are traders and carry on business at No. 237 Wing Lok Street, Victoria. (3) On the 17th day of July 1906 the plaintiff at Macassar remitted to the defendants in Hongkong the sum of \$1,000 through the Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij by bill of exchange. (4) The said bill of exchange was handed by the plaintiff to the defendants on her arrival in Hongkong on or about the 3rd August 1906 for collection on her behalf and for her use and benefit. (5) The defendants collected the said sum of \$1,000 from the Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij. (6) The plaintiff has demanded from the defendants the sum of \$1,000, but the defendants refused to pay.

The statement of defence set forth that the defendant firm had become bankrupt and that the plaintiff had received dividends on the amount due.

At the last hearing Mr. Grist contended that the plaintiff could not split her cause of action. The defendants had received \$3,600 on behalf of plaintiff and had, at her request, lodged it with a firm which had become bankrupt. She had received dividends on the amount due.

Mr. d'Almada consented to being non-suited and this was done.

Thursday, 7th May.

IN BANKRUPTCY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE THE CHIEF JUSTICE (SIR F. PIGGOTT).

APPLICATIONS TO RESCIND.

Re Moosa e Vieira, application to rescind a receiving order.

Mr. E. J. Grist, on behalf of the petitioning debtor, asked for a further adjournment as the arrangement made with the creditors had practically been approved by all the parties and only the consent of the Court was now required. He wished to lodge a draft deed with the Court.

His Honour—What do you propose to do?

Mr. Grist—Will your Lordship refer it to the Registrar?

The public examination was adjourned for a week.

Re J. C. Logan, application to rescind a receiving order.

This matter was adjourned for another week on the application of the Official Receiver (Mr. Wakeman) who explained that a compromise had been arrived at and the matter was practically completed.

COMMISSION AGENT'S FAILURE.

Re Herbert Stephens, ex parte debtor.

Debtor in answer to the Official Receiver, said he had lately been carrying on business as a merchant. He commenced in July 1904 on capital supplied by Mr. Wong Lee who found \$6,000. That did not imply a partnership. It was furnished to send debtor home to England to arrange for agencies. He was away for one year. During his absence the clerk left in charge had trouble with Mr. Wong Lee as to the \$6,000 and had made arrangements with him to repay the money by instalments. The business continued until his return in October 1905, and after getting rid of Mr. Wong Lee he entered into partnership with Mr. Tregillas and Mr. Vincenot. Mr. Vincenot subscribed \$10,000, himself \$4,000 and Mr. Tregillas \$2,500. Debtor's share was 50 per cent of the profits and he was allowed to draw a salary of \$250 a month. Mr. Vincenot drew \$250 per month as a salary and 25 per cent of the profit and Mr. Tregillas drew \$175 a month and 25 per cent of the profits. There was still \$600 due to Mr. Wong Lee out of the \$6,000 advanced. He established a business connection as the result of his trip home, having secured several commissions on a subsidised basis. The subsidies alone were worth about \$8,000 a year. That was apart from the commission. The business paid. They sold all sorts of piece goods to the Chinese. They really acted as travellers. In the first half year the profits amounted to \$24,000 and about \$5,000 net. Approximately their gross profits were about \$2,000 a month from which \$1,200 expenses were deducted. They kept books but they did not make up a balance sheet after the first half year. Their Portuguese bookkeeper muddled up things and they had to get

their old accountant back again. He knew nothing about bookkeeping; that was not in his department. He had now no partners. Mr. Tregillas died in April of last year. He carried on business for the firm at Shanghai. They lost money there all the time. In March 1907, Mr. Vincenot retired. They paid him out \$3,600. He had overdrawn before he left the firm. The sum mentioned was agreed upon as a settlement. All that money had been paid to him with the exception of \$1,400. Debtor gave him promissory notes for the amount of the \$3,400. He had not settled Mr. Tregillas' share. As far as they knew the deceased gentleman had overdrawn his account. Debtor attributed his bankruptcy to losses incurred through their comrade having entered into contracts on behalf of the firm which he did not make good. His security only amounted to \$20,000. Debtor estimated his losses in that connection as over \$6,290. The comrade owed them that amount. Debtor's first difficulties occurred in August 1906 when on coming back from Shanghai he found that many dealers were not taking up their cargoes and the comrade was not able to get money to make good their obligations to the banks. He did not know he was unable to meet his liabilities until the receiving order was issued. Mr. Tregillas, senior, advanced \$6,000 in January of last year for the business. Debtor was not aware the firm was in difficulties at that time. The \$2,574 was borrowed from Mr. Jas White by Mr. Tregillas in the name of the firm in Shanghai. Debtor did not have any of the money, and he did not know whether it appeared in the books or not. A sum of \$200 borrowed from Madame Flint was for the expenses in connection with the bankruptcy petition.

The Official Receiver—I do not propose to ask any further questions at present. It is a very complicated business. It is impossible to get through the piles and piles of books.

His Lordship—Was it a fairly large business?

Debtor—Yes.

What was your turnover?—About \$600,000 or \$700,000 a year.

Mr. Wakeman—The books have been improperly kept. I have had to employ an accountant and he has not finished yet.

His Lordship—What are the liabilities?

The Official Receiver—Practically nothing.

His Lordship—What has happened? Has the business evaporated?

The Official Receiver—Yes. The goods are claimed by the people who ordered them. The liabilities amount to \$46,032 and the assets to \$41,000. I cannot explain that.

His Lordship—It seems a pity.

The Official Receiver—Mr. Kemp and myself have been in correspondence with creditors in England. We thought we would be able to come to an arrangement and that the creditors would help him with further capital but they declined.

His Lordship—And the business has been stopped since January?

The Official Receiver—Yes.

His Lordship—If you had capital you could carry on?

Debtor—Yes.

Mr. Deacon representing the creditors in England, questioned debtor who said that before commencing business he had been manager in Hongkong for Messrs. Boyd, Caine and Company. His arrangement with Wong Lee was that the latter should receive six tenths of the profits provided he was able to make a business. The losses at Shanghai in two years amounted to \$15,000 which almost absorbed their profits. Mr. Vincenot retired and Mr. Tregillas took over the books and worked out a statement which showed that the business was solvent. There was a small balance on the right side. Mr. Vincenot was paid in promissory notes. The comrade's security of \$20,000 was absorbed through his ordering goods for which there were no customers and which had to be sold by auction at enormous losses. Debtor thought the firm was solvent up to the time of the receiving order as he expected to make profits on cargoes taken up by Chinese dealers. He did not know that these dealers were shaky. After the death of Mr. Tregillas his sister looked after the books. She was not a competent bookkeeper and no one supervised her. By that time, however, April 1907, the firm was practically in liquidation.

The examination was adjourned.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE MR. H. H. J. GOMPERTZ (ACTING PUISNE JUDGE).

ALL ABOUT A DOG.

Tin Kan and Chu Sing Choy, employed in the Naval Yard, claimed \$30 from Cheong Yeong for his imprisonment. Mr. S. Dixon appeared for the plaintiff and Mr. Morrell for the defendant.

The litigation arose over a dog which defendant lost and which he accused plaintiffs of stealing. He brought the police to his aid and they searched the plaintiffs' residence. The police sergeant did not believe them when they denied the accusation and he took them to the house of a man Wong Lap from whom they said they had received a dog which they had eaten. Wong Lap admitted having sold a dog to them but still they were taken to the Police Station. On being brought before the magistrate they were dismissed.

The police sergeant had written a letter to Mr. Dixon in which he explained that the two men were not charged but only asked to attend before the Magistrate.

Tin Kan was cross-examined at length by Mr. Morrell.

Did Cheong Yeong tell the sergeant to arrest you?—Yes.

What did defendant say?—He said—These are they!

You say the Sergeant struck you in the face. Did defendant instruct him to do that?—No.

Chu Sing Choy was also cross-examined by Mr. Morrell.

Now, this dog you ate what did you do with the head, when you dressed it for dinner?—We ate it.

Ate the head? And the feet also?—Yes.

You ate the whole dog—head, feet, and skin?—We singed the dog and then ate the whole of it.

His Lordship—What was the age of this dog? Mr. Morrell—A full grown dog.

How many were present at the dinner?—Twenty or thirty.

Wong Lap said he sold a dog to plaintiffs, and that it was the custom among those who ate dog to eat every portion of it except the hair.

Sergeant Lee denied assaulting the men.

Mr. Morrell contended that it did not constitute false imprisonment for the defendant to have complained to the constable, if the constable acted on his discretion, as happened in the present case.

His Honour accepted this view and gave judgment for defendant, adding that it was "hard lines" for Mr. Dixon's clients.

Mr. Dixon protested that the police should have let his clients go after going to Wong Lap's house, and applied for costs.

His Honour refused the application.

BOARD OF TRADE SUPERVISION.

In the Bankruptcy Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court on May 7th an interesting point was raised by the Official Receiver (Mr. Wakeman).

Mr. Wakeman said he understood that accounts were sent to the Registrar.

His Lordship—What has he to do with it?

Mr. Wakeman—I understand he supervises the accounts. He stands in the place of the Board of Trade.

His Lordship—No. The accounts are only sent to him for audit.

Mr. Wakeman—Perhaps so, my Lord, but that has been the practice here.

At a later stage

Mr. Wakeman asked, who is the Board of Trade here?

His Lordship said he could not say. He added that the Ordinance excluded the Board of Trade supervision. That power was taken away for a specific purpose, and there was nothing whatever corresponding to the Board of Trade here.

Mr. Wakeman—I was under the impression that I had to discharge the same duties as the Board of Trade. I have frequently done so.

His Lordship—Yes. The procedure is the old procedure. There is no Board of Trade Supervision here.

COMPANIES.

THE HONGKONG ELECTRIC CO.,
LIMITED.

The nineteenth ordinary general meeting of the shareholders of the Hongkong Electric Co., Limited, was held at the Company's offices, St. George's Building, on May 2nd. Mr. J. W. C. Bonnar presided and there were present, Sir Paul Chater, and E. G. Barrett (directors) Dr. Noble, Messrs T. Skinner, A. H. M. da Silva, F. Graham (Acting Manager), J. F. Wright, W. A. Dowley, G. J. B. Sayer, R. Roberto, J. Owen Hughes, L. E. Ozorio, and O. Baptista. The notice convening the meeting having been read,

The CHAIRMAN said—Gentlemen: The report and statement of accounts having been in your hands for some time, I propose, with your permission, to take them as read. The Directors are pleased to come before you with what appears to them, as I feel sure it will to you, such a satisfactory report of the year's working. It shows a further expansion in the Company's operations, our services now equalling upwards of 47,000 lamps of 8 candle power; 85 arc lamps and 24 lifts, against 44,500 lamps; 85 arc lamps and 20 lifts at the date of our last report, and with the reduction made in cost of current supplied as from 1st March of this year we have good grounds for looking for a further extension of our operations. Our plant account shows a considerable increase mainly due to payment for the two Diesel alternator sets of 300 horsepower each. These are just about completed, and we trust to have them working during this month. The Land and Building account also shows a considerable increase, due in a large measure to renewals and alterations preparatory to putting in the Diesel engines. Our stock of installation material, coal and stores stand at almost the same amount as last year. Sundry debtors show an increase over last year, but since closing the accounts fully half of that amount has been collected. The balance of profit and loss account amount to \$159,637.13 and after deducting \$3,000 for directors' fees a sum of \$156,637.13 remains available for appropriation and your Directors propose to deal with this as follows: To pay a dividend of 10 per cent—say \$1.00 per share on 60,000 shares \$60,000.00; to pay a bonus of 2 per cent—say 20 cents per share on 60,000 shares \$12,000.00; to write off Plant Account for depreciation \$58,303.61; to write off from Land and Building Account \$13,612.10; to pay a bonus to staff \$3,395.40; to carry forward to next account \$9,321.43; making a total of \$156,637.13. I trust this proposal will meet with your sanction and approval, it being an increase of 2 per cent. over last year's return to shareholders. The continued writing down of the plant account is essential especially in view of the adoption of Diesel engines by the Company for the greater working success of the engines, the more necessary it will become to write off and entirely displace the steam plant, that now forms a large proportion of the Company's assets. The writing down of the property account is necessary as the Station buildings are nearly 20 years old and the money spent on this account during the year has been expended in alterations and renewals rather than on additional buildings. Further expenditure under this head will be necessary, and will have to be undertaken whether future extensions of plant are made with oil or steam. I am sure the bonus to the staff which is equal to one month's salary will commend itself to you. A substantially large amount is recommended to be carried forward in order that the shareholders may have confidence in the Company's endeavours to maintain a steady and satisfactory dividend and at the same time make due provision for the inevitable depreciation of plant and such like assets. In the Chairman's speech last year he mentioned that it might be necessary at no distant date to increase our capital. The necessity has not arisen during the past year and your Directors are hopeful of being able to finance any increase in plant, etc., which may occur during the present year without having to raise fresh capital.

Before moving the adoption of the report I shall be pleased to answer any questions.

There being no questions, The CHAIRMAN moved the adoption of the report.

Dr. NOBLE said: I rise with pleasure to second the adoption of the report and statement of accounts as presented, and also to congratulate the Board of Directors, agents and the staff on the completion of another very satisfactory year's work, which is after all, only one of many very many successful preceding ones (Applause).

The report was unanimously adopted.

The appointment of the Hon. Mr. H. Keswick, Mr. E. G. Barrett and Mr. J. W. C. Bonnar to the directorate, in place of the Hon. Mr. W. J. Gresson, Mr. G. H. Medhurst, and Mr. A. G. Wood who have resigned their seats was confirmed on the motion of Mr. HUGHES, seconded by Mr. DOWLEY. Sir Paul Chater and the Hon. Mr. H. Keswick were re-elected directors on the proposition of Mr. G. SAYER, seconded by Mr. A. H. M. DA SILVA.

Mr. T. SKINNER proposed that Messrs Hutton Potts and Mr. C. W. May be elected auditors. Mr. CZORIO seconded and this was agreed to.

The ACTING MANAGER said:—Chairman and Gentlemen: On behalf of the members of the staff and myself I express my thanks for the bonus which you have just voted to us.

The CHAIRMAN. That is all the business, gentlemen. Dividend warrants will be ready on Monday.

THE NATIONAL BANK OF
CHINA, LTD.

The report of the directors to the seventeenth ordinary annual general meeting of shareholders, to be held at the offices of the bank Victoria Buildings, Hongkong, on May, 16th reads:—

To the shareholders, of the National Bank of China, Limited.

The directors now beg to submit to you the accounts and balance sheet for the year ending 31st December, 1907.

The accounts show that the balance of \$71,293.9 brought forward from last year together with \$150,000 from general reserve fund have been required in addition to the working profit during the year to make full provision for bad and doubtful debts in 1907, and previous years, as foreshadowed in the Chairman's speech at the annual general meeting held in 1906. This will leave \$150,000 in general reserve fund and a balance of \$10,223.09 to be carried forward to next account.

The capital reserve fund which stood at \$152,820 on the 31st December, 1906, has been appropriated to the extent of \$104,701.66 to enable the last call of £41,453 (received at 1/4) to appear at 1/8 to the dollar in conformity with the rest of the capital.

Mr. C. Ewens retires in rotation from the Hongkong Board, but, being eligible, offers himself for re-election.

The accounts at head office have been audited by Mr. A. R. Lowe, chartered accountant, and Mr. E. A. M. Williams, A.S.A.A. (of the firm of Messrs. Lowe and Bingham).

Messrs. Deloitte, Plender, Griffiths & Co., chartered accountants, audited the London accounts.

J. SCOTT HARBSTON,
Chairman,

Hongkong, 31st March, 1908.

Balance Sheet 31st December, 1907.

LIABILITIES.

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Authorized Capital:— | |
| 99,925 Ordinary shares of £7 each | £699,475 |
| Issued capital (at 1s. 8d. to the \$):— | |
| 40,453 Ordinary shares of £7 each £5 paid up | £202,285.52, £127,180.00 |
| 1906 call of £1 on 40,453 shares at 2 1/4 to the \$ | \$38,734.34 |
| Add transfer from capital reserve fund to adjust ex. to ls. 8d. | 104,701.66 |
| | 485,436.00 |
| Capital reserve fund | \$2,912,616.00 |
| Reserve fund | 48,113.34 |
| Notes in circulation | 150,000.00 |
| | \$70,830.00 |

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Fixed deposits, current accounts, loans, &c. | 1,644,631.87 |
| Bills for collection and branch balances | 119,844.81 |
| Drafts, acceptances and endorsements (bills re-discounted) | 2,675.43 |
| Balance of profit and loss account | 10,223.09 |
| | \$5,158,933.94 |

ASSETS.

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Cash on hand at Bankers | \$ 348,833.96 |
| Money at Call and at Short Notice | 690,000.00 |
| Government Securities, (£50,000 at 1s. 9 1/2) | 551,724.10 |
| Bills Receivable, Loans and Advances | 3,180,937.22 |
| Bills for Collection Receivable and Branch Balances | 407,443.66 |
| | \$5,158,933.94 |

PROFIT and LOSS ACCOUNT, for the Year
ending 31st December, 1907.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Charges, Directors' Fees, Salaries, etc. | \$ 108,476.60 |
| Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts, etc., (after deducting Gross Earning for the year ending 31st December 1907) | 102,593.40 |
| Balance to be carried forward to next Account | 10,223.09 |
| | \$221,293.09 |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Balance brought forward from last year | \$ 71,293.09 |
| Amount transferred from Reserve Fund | 150,000.00 |
| | \$221,293.09 |

On 1st January, 1908, the Capital and Reserve Funds will stand as follows:—

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| Capital (at 1s. 8d. to the \$) | £242,718. 0.0 | \$2,912,616.00 |
| Capital Reserve Fund (at 1s. 8d. to the \$) | 4,009.17.3 | 48,113.34 |
| Reserve Fund (at 1 1/4 to the \$) | 13,593.15.0 | 150,000.00 |
| | £260,321.12.3 | \$3,110,734.34 |

WATKINS, LIMITED.

The report of the general managers to be presented at the ninth ordinary annual meeting of shareholders to be held at the Company's Offices, on May 30th reads:—

Gentlemen,—We beg to submit to you our report and statement of the accounts for the year ended the 31st December, 1907.

PROFITS AND LOSS ACCOUNT.

The result for the year shows a profit of \$13,282.32, to which must be added rents receivable \$622.22; banking interest and transfer fees \$52.24, making a total of \$13,956.78.

This, your general managers find necessary to allocate to meet interest on mortgage and loans \$2,539.15; depreciation \$3,972.54; reserve for doubtful debts, \$1,726.96; building depreciation reserve \$2,000, and loss on subsidiary coins and exchange \$2,963.55, leaving a balance of \$754.58 to carry forward to next account.

AUDITORS.

The accounts have been audited by Messrs. Lowe and Bingham.

CHAN A. FOOK } General Managers.
G. A. WATKINS. }

Hong kong 11th March. 1908.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

For the year ended 31st December, 1907.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| To mortgage interest | 1,400.00 |
| To interest on loan and overdrafts | 1,139.15 |
| Depreciation:— | |
| Shop fittings and furniture at 15 per cent. | 1,710.46 |
| Stock in trade | 2,262.08 |
| | 3,972.54 |
| To reserve for doubtful debts | 1,726.96 |
| To building depreciation reserve | 2,000.00 |
| To loss on subsidiary coinage | 1,393.55 |
| To loss on sterling exchange | 1,570.00 |
| | 2,963.55 |
| To balance carried to next account | 754.58 |
| | \$13,956.78 |
| By balance of working account | 13,282.32 |
| By rent receivable | 622.22 |
| By bank interest and transfer fees | 52.24 |
| | \$13,956.78 |

BALANCE SHEET, 31st December, 1907.

LIABILITIES.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Capital:— | |
| 10,000 shares of \$10 each, fully paid | 100,000.00 |
| Creditors:— | |
| Loans payable | 2,000.00 |
| Trade creditors acceptances | 7,999.68 |
| Open accounts | 4,227.04 |
| Unclaimed dividends | 466.10 |
| | 14,692.82 |

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Building depreciation reserve account:— | |
| As per balance sheet 31st December 1906 | 13,000.00 |
| Amount transferred from 1907 profits | 2,000.00 |
| | 15,000.00 |
| Reserve for doubtful debts:— | |
| As per balance sheet 31st December, 1906 | 3,252.76 |
| Transferred from 1907 profits | 1,726.86 |
| | \$4,979.72 |
| Add:— | |
| Recoveries in 1907 less bad debts written off | 20.28 |
| | 5,000.00 |
| Profit and loss account | 754.58 |
| | \$135,447.40 |
| ASSETS. \$ c. | |
| Building:— | |
| As per last balance sheet 31st December 1906 (see reserve per contra) | 26,900.24 |
| Additions and improvements during year | 300.00 |
| | \$27,200.24 |
| Furniture and fittings:— | |
| As per balance sheet at 31st December 1906 | 11,403.09 |
| Less depreciation at 15 per cent | 1,710.46 |
| | 9,692.63 |
| Additions during the year | 32.56 |
| | 9,725.18 |
| Aerated water plant:— | |
| As per balance sheet 31st December 1906 | 5,106.90 |
| Stock on hand: (sterling exchange 1-9 3-4) | 66,357.51 |
| Less depreciation written off 1906 profits 3,737.92 | |
| Less depreciation written off 1906 profits 2,262.08 | |
| | 6,000.00 |
| | 60,357.51 |
| Debtors:— | |
| Trade | 26,966.37 |
| Sundries | 2,811.04 |
| | 29,567.41 |
| Unexpired fire insurance and licences | 1,106.17 |
| Cash:— | |
| Russo-Chinese Bank | 1,601.31 |
| Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation | 45.10 |
| In hand | 729.58 |
| | 2,375.99 |
| | \$135,447.40 |

SWATOW'S NEW POST OFFICE.

FORMAL OPENING.

On the 2nd inst. the new Buildings of the Imperial Post Office were opened at Swatow, by the Taotai of Cheochow in presence of General Huang, the Prefect, the three District Magistrates, the Consuls and the leading Chinese and Foreign residents, in all some sixty or more invited guests. After an introductory speech in Chinese by Mr. A. H. Harris, the Taotai delivered an inaugural address. This was translated and followed by the speech of Mr. Harris, who said:

I have taken the liberty to invite your presence here to celebrate the erection and formal opening of this new and independent home of the Imperial Post Office at Swatow. I may remind you that an interport postal service long formed a part of the work of each Custom House. Originally supported and worked by the Customs Service to convenience and expedite its own convenience, the postal department had been gradually extended to meet public wants to a limited extent, and when after many years of patient waiting—the first proposal to establish a National Post Office having been made by Sir Robert Hart in 1861—an Imperial Decree to inaugurate and develop a National Service was issued, the management of the Imperial Post Service inaugurated by that Decree on the 20th March, 1896 (Kuang Hsu 22nd year, 2nd moon, 7th day) was confided to the Inspector-General. The aim and intention of Sir Robert Hart were to so plan procedure as to avoid friction, alike for officials and governments as with respect to existing institutions, in order that a future day might see the national administration functioning widely and fully appreciated. The people finding in it and its developments an everyday convenience, some of them an honourable career, and the Government a useful servant, and also, in this populous, industrious, and letter-loving country,

a perennial source of revenue. To what extent the forecast and intention have been more than justified a few facts will show. The postal branch of the Imperial Civil Service reached a state of semi-independence from its sister Customs Service on the 11th July, 1904 (Kuang Hsu 30th year, 4th moon, 28th day) when an Imperial Rescript sanctioned the issue of an annual grant-in-aid of Taels 70,000. The following year 1905 marked an important departure in its career, since, notwithstanding the fact that of the sanctioned subsidy more than half had not been paid yet, the postal administration ceased in that year to appeal for pecuniary help from the funds of the Customs Service and was able to make ends meet with its own resources, that is revenue and subsidy combined. It continued, however, to borrow the service of various members from its sister branches and without these from the Inspector General downwards, its inauguration and development would not have been possible. A comparison of the figures for 1901 and 1906 may serve to indicate its progress.—

| | 1901. | 1906. |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Head Offices | 30 | 38 |
| Branch Offices and Agencies | 146 | 2,018 |
| Articles dealt with | 10,500,000 | 113,001,000 |
| Parcels: number | 126,000 | 1,383,000 |
| weight (kilos) | 250,000 | 4,310,000 |
| Letters in native clubbed mails | 7,300,000 | 7,892,000 |
| Employees: Foreign | 65 | 105 |
| Native | 882 | 5,578 |

The outlook for the future of the postal service is bright and continued advance may be relied on. Among its 38 districts there are a dozen as large as most countries in Europe, all with teeming millions. What has been achieved in this immense Empire is but a small beginning and it is easy to foresee that the wave of progress now passing over China can but favour its rapid development and hasten its completion. So much for the Service as a whole. May I be allowed to add a few particulars regarding our own district. We had on 31st December last 81 offices and agencies with a paid staff of two Foreigners and 197 natives. Our courier lines are estimated to total over 1,600 miles. We handled one and a quarter million articles in addition to one-third of a million covers enclosed in registered postal hong clubbed packages. Of parcels over 50,000 weighing nearly 370,000 pounds passed through the office. Coming to receipts the public patronage produced a revenue of nearly \$38,000 or only about \$2,000 short of our ordinary disbursements. These figures are net and do not include the issue of over \$80,000 worth of money orders and payments amounting to nearly \$29,000 on the same account. And in addition the quota of the postal grant sanctioned by Imperial Edict and apportioned to this port for payment has been regularly handed to us by the Customs Superintendent and forwarded to the Inspector General. The Head Office staff of 34 employees has been working under many difficulties in three, and latterly in four, small rooms provided for us in the Custom House. Having long outgrown that accommodation we now move into this building. It is as you see a plain and substantial one, but it is also of useful size and planned for developments. That it may continue to fulfil its object and that we may continue to deserve the patronage of the public is the earnest wish of all the staff.

In the absence of Mr. Hauser, Mr. T. W. Richardson proposed the Post Office and staff. He said: The statements made in the opening speech of Mr. Harris are very interesting. The rapid development of the Imperial sanction in 1896, must exceed that of many other countries on their first adoption of a similar institution—and large as is the revenue of Great Britain from that source, it is possible that China will overtake it within no very remote period. Among the first records of postage in Great Britain, I find that the rate was fixed at 1d per mile in 1549, and it was not till many years afterwards that a distance sliding scale was found to be inappropriate. The progress of ideas in relation to the development of the service, moved slowly—but in 1839 Rowland Hill succeeded in persuading Parliament and the Public that an inland 1d rate would

bring a larger revenue than the heavy and complicated rates current previously. Since that time till now reforms chiefly connected with Colonial and Foreign rates, among which the establishment of a Postal Union with various European countries and our own Colonies—(towards which the first steps were taken in 1861) have been continuous and beneficial. It would be interesting if we could meet with records of the first dawn of a postal service in China. No doubt, it would be, as in Europe also, conducted by parties for the benefit of their own business and extended at times to accepting a fee from their neighbours. The first general postal service that I came in contact with in China, was that of a guild whose postmen were called couriers between Amoy and Foochow. This would be about 1857 when coasting steamers were not numerous, and the China tea trade then culminating in haughty monopoly and grandeur, required at times more rapid communication than was afforded by steamers. No doubt similar guilds existed or could have been called into existence elsewhere if necessitated by trade—but as trade where foreigners were concerned, was confined almost entirely to the Treaty Ports, there was but little to draw their attention to the facilities for inland Chinese correspondence. To Hongkong is, I suppose, due the issue of the first postage stamps, and in these early days the postage on a coast letter was eight cents. Gradually other European countries established post offices of their own at many of the Treaty Ports, though their raison d'être was scarcely patent in the requirements of trade and finally as we learn from Mr. Harris' opening remarks, the Chinese Government decided on taking a part which was rightfully theirs, in the administration of postal affairs. To begin with, it does not seem to have erred on the side of high postage rates. To have one's correspondence delivered within the limits of the port and Chao-chow-foo for one cent, is cheap and corresponds, I presume, with the rates fixed at the various other head offices and branches. This will give an impetus to the already important development noticed by Mr. Harris, and when the population to be served is considered, the potentialities of increase are enormous. Statistical comparison between Great Britain—with its population of only some 45 million—and China is scarcely permissible under the present conditions of the two countries—they are so very different—but perhaps I may point out, in order to stimulate the officers and employees of the Chinese postal service to continuous effort in their several duties, and encourage the enlistment of others, that while Mr. Harris puts the number of Chinese employed in 1906 at 5,640, Great Britain in 1901 had a staff of 178,000, of whom 35,500 were women. Here again we are met by contrasts, radically opposed, for to contemplate that the Chinese Government might ultimately take the destiny of its female population into more paternal consideration, and give them some share in the lighter departments of letter distribution, would be contrary to Asiatic ethics. It is interesting work, and there are curious anomalies to be met with at times in I daresay, nearly every post office, comic too in their character as the annual report of the Postmaster General in London often testifies. Just think that in 1901 the total value of property found in undelivered letters opened in the return letter office, though every effort had been made to find the rightful owners, was £681,000. At times of stress and difficulty too, the ingenuity of the officials of the post office may have to be tested in ways that are unforeseen, and many surprising developments will result. In 1870/1 during the Franco German war, pigeons were commandeered to do the work of postmen,—and well they did it too—while balloons also took part in the distribution of correspondence. It is curious also to note the distinctions made in various countries of the Postal Union, in connection with ownership of letters once posted. In Great Britain the ownership vests in the King till delivered—yet in India the sender has property in his letter till delivered, and in transit may recall it. It is the same in Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Portugal, Russia and the Scandinavian Kingdoms—but in Canada a letter belongs to its addressee as soon as posted. How is it to

be in China? There is an apophthegm that "Correspondence is the offspring of advanced civilization." From time immemorial there has been correspondence in China, and we all know how forward in certain special aspects her civilization has been. Now however, that such correspondence is to be carried safely, swiftly, under the control of a well ordered service it will be multiplied, and its offspring will create a civilization visible in all aspects. In which hope I ask you to wish all prosperity to the Post Office and its officials and to congratulate the Chinese Government through Mr. Harris on the acquisition of the New Swatow Post Office, which appears to be admirably adapted for the present necessities, though I hope it will before long prove too small.

The Director of Foreign Affairs, Taotai Liang, added a few words in Chinese and English.

In returning thanks on behalf of the staff, Mr. Harris remarked on an interesting coincidence. The day of the opening of this new Post Office, fortuitously selected by the Taotai of the Circuit is the day which sees the departure from China on furlough of Sir Robert Hart, and he called upon the company to join in wishing him a pleasant voyage and furlough and his successor, Sir Robert Bredon, prosperity and success in his difficult task of following in the footsteps of such an able administrator.

TIENTSIN.

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.]

Tientsin, April 19th.

NOTES FROM PEKING.

A propos the recent visit of the British Minister, Sir John Jordan, to Hongkong and Canton, there are complaints in British and Chinese circles in North China that British diplomacy in the Chinese capital is at present being conducted on lines not tending so much as they might do to further true British or Chinese interests, and that, in regard to the latter, the United States and Germany are acute enough to make use of their opportunities and are posing successfully in Peking as the particular friends of China. The attitude of the Washington Government and its representatives in Peking and Manchuria is held to bear out this view. But there is little sympathy here among foreigners other than Americans with the attitude of Mr. Fisher at Harbin. More sympathy has been expressed with the position assumed by, or ascribed to Mr. Straight at Moukden, but that is probably because an ex parte view of the case only has been published. Mr. Kato, the Japanese Consul-General, who used to be Consul-General in Tientsin, and before that was Consul-General at Seoul, has so far maintained as regard the press and the public strict reserve and reticence in relation to the affair. This allows judgment to go by default so far as the general public are concerned, and many do him injustice if not also injury. If the matter be critically and impartially examined, it was a paltry squabble between domestics and coolies not worthy of the interposition of any foreigner, much less a Consul. But here as elsewhere in the Far East any stick is good enough to beat Japan and the Japanese with; and the two newspaper correspondents at Moukden appear to have recognised this and made the most of the incident in the most approved yellow journal style.

THE BOYCOTT.

One sees the anti-Japanese bias in the attempts that are made by foreigners to instigate the Chinese to pursue and develop their boycott instituted in consequence of the "Tatsu Maru" incident and its sequel. Americans, Germans and French as well as Belgians and Dutch are trying to utilise the boycotting campaign of the Cantonese and other Southern Chinese to push their own commercial interests. They do not see—or, if they do see it, they ignore the fact, which is quite patent to all with any economic knowledge, that if the boycott grows and is effective from the point of view of its promoters, it will damage both the Chinese and Japanese financially, and the last state of things commercial will be much worse for everybody all round, self-seeking foreigners included, than the original condition of things.

THE I.M.C.

On March 26 Sir Robert Hart was received by their Majesties the Empress Dowager and the Emperor, who gave him presents and thanked him for his faithful services as Inspector-General of the Imperial Maritime Customs for so long a period, and expressed the hope that he would speedily return, restored to full health, to resume his duties. On the 16th inst. all Peking attended a reception held by Sir Robert and Lady Bredon for the purpose of affording an opportunity of saying bon voyage and goodbye to the distinguished chief. This week Sir Robert Hart leaves Peking for Chiuwangtao, where he sails in the Chinese revenue cruiser Pingching to Shanghai, there to embark on May 2nd in the N. D. L. s.s. "Yorck" for England. Opportunity will thus be afforded to his many friends and admirers in Hongkong to greet him on his journey home after an absence of 34 years without home leave.

Sir Robert Bredon has commenced his régime as Acting Inspector-General exceedingly well from the standpoint both of his own and of the general interest. It is not generally known what fierce opposition there was to his being appointed to fill Sir Robert Hart's place during his absence. The most indefatigable efforts were made by his bitter opponents, the Shanghai clique and the China Association wirepullers to secure the appointment of another candidate more favourable to the special cultivation of their own financial interests. It is curious to note that one of the main charges against Sir Robert Bredon was that he was pro-Chinese! Surely this is not a very grave fault in a Chinese Official. It might be levelled with equal accuracy against Sir Robert Hart. What do these Anglo-Chinese financiers want? They are still persisting in their campaign against Sir Robert Bredon. They say and expect that Sir Robert Hart's home leave is merely a prelude to final retirement, and openly avow their intention of upsetting the succession of Sir Robert Bredon before the aged Inspector-General actually tenders his resignation. I am sorry to have to record that the British Minister in Peking is reported—and my authority is highly credible—to have expressed himself as siding with the enemies of Sir Robert Bredon—a very injudicious thing for a diplomat in his position to do.

Tientsin, April 22nd.

TAKU BAR.

Sir Robert Bredon has just come forward to help the port of Tientsin out of a serious difficulty. As all shipping people, in Southern as well as in North China, are aware, the Taku Bar has long been an impediment to the progress of Tientsin as the principal shipping port in the North. The improvement of the Peiho Channel is equally necessary and pressing. For three years past the Haiho Conservancy Commissioners, the Tientsin hong, the British Municipal Councils, and the leading shipping firms using the port—all of which latter have head offices or important branches in other ports also, have been discussing various schemes, engineering and financial, for the improvement of the Bar and river from the navigation point of view. But even in connection with this one matter the special interests of all these bodies are not identical. All may be said to be pro-Tientsin and pro-river-and-harbour improvement except the shipping companies, amongst whom I include the Tug and Lighter Companies (Messrs. Butterfield and Swire being one of these and the Taku Tug and Lighter Co., another). These latter are not particularly concerned about the future of Tientsin as a port so long as they can land their cargoes and take freight aboard at Tan'ku or Chiuwangtao. And so when called upon to pay their share of the cost of Bar and harbour and river improvement works they have sometimes demurred, and always delayed and deferred the matter.

For two years past the Haiho Commissioners have had the services of Mr. T. Ferguson, now Commissioner of Native Customs in Tientsin, a Dutchman and an amateur Engineer of unusual ability and originality. Mr. Ferguson adapted for the purposes of bar improvement at the mouth of the river a raking appliance, the use of which, at comparatively small cost, added several inches to the depth of the channel across the Taku Bar. But this

year opened without any funds being forthcoming to continue the work. The Haiho Conservancy Commissioners had two schemes of operations—one for a continuation of Mr. Ferguson's raking work in the New Channel, this being only temporary in character and effects; and the other a permanent scheme based on a report and recommendations by Mr. de Rijke, the engineer, of Shanghai. But the shipping companies, without positively objecting, dallied and delayed, and only last week consented to a scheme of temporary taxation for this year only to enable Mr. Ferguson's raking work to be carried on during the present summer and autumn. Even then there were certain formalities to be gone through which would have postponed till late in the year any practical work in the Bar channel, and when autumn came the channel might have silted up.

Now, however, Sir Robert Bredon, Acting I.G., I.M.C., has come forward with a loan to the Haiho Conservancy-Commissioners, and this will enable work at the Bar to be commenced forthwith and will render the Commissioners independent, for this year at any rate, of the shipowners. Sir Robert's action has the strong approval both of the Chinese authorities here and of the Chinese Central Government in Peking. Correspondingly it has caused the action of the shipping interest to appear in a more unfavourable light than ever. Future developments will be very interesting to watch.

THE LATE MR. F. O. SEATON.

Hongkong and other South China readers will hear with regret of the death at his residence, "Shameen," Brighton Road, Purley, Surrey, on March 25, of Mr. Frederic Ongly Seaton, who was retired from the British Consular Service on account of a breakdown of health. He was British Vice-Consul at Macao from 1898 to 1906. He was 53 years of age, and was well and favourably known in Macao, Hongkong, and Canton for at least twenty years prior to 1906, when he returned to England.

Mr. Seaton was a son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Cole. Mr. Cole too was well known in Hongkong and Macao, as well as in Singapore and Penang; he was on the staff of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company successively at Singapore, Penang, Rangoon, Malacca, Singapore again, Shanghai; and in charge as Number One at Macao, Labuan (British North Borneo), Penang again, Adelaide (S. Australia), Perth (W. Australia), and Penang again. He is now Number One in charge of the Tientsin office of the company. Mrs. Seaton spent the greater part of her life in the Far East, and there is some possibility that she may come out here instead of spending her widowhood in England where she has comparatively few friends.

HART HONOURED.

Sir Robert Hart had a magnificent send off from Peking. The Chinese Government sent 1,000 troops as a guard of honour, this being equivalent to the guard of honour of a prince of the blood. All the Foreign Legations sent guards of honour, and there were several bands including Sir Robert Hart's own Band of which he is so naturally proud.

Tientsin, 24th April.

Quite unprecedented in point of numbers and representative character were the scenes both at the Railway station in Peking and at the City and Settlement Railway Stations in Tientsin on the occasion of the departure of Sir Robert Hart on the 22nd inst.

It was noted with satisfaction that the Inspector-General was looking robust, vigorous, and young. His appearance was much more, healthy than it was several months ago when he was very seedy indeed. He looked better than he has done any time these past two years. What he said, and what those in close touch with him said, rather tended to silence those who, pretending to be in the know, have been confidently asserting that Sir Robert will never return to China to take up his duties again.

In Tientsin Settlement Station the biggest crowd on record gathered to say farewell to Sir Robert. Among the many incidents of the short stay the Inspector General made on the platform was one comical episode. There has recently joined the I.M.C. staff in Tientsin Mr. Mansfield, son of the British Consul.

General in Canton. Mr. Mansfield, who has a very distinct individuality in general prominent respects, came to Tientsin with the reputation of being one of the best amateur photographers in the Customs Service. He was at the Station on Wednesday with a big camera which he repeatedly set in front of the Inspector-General. Sir Robert, however, has a hatred of publicity and of being lionised, and obviously kept moving and turning so as to defeat the attempts of the photographic amateur. Mr. Mansfield persisted so much, to the evident discomfort of Sir Robert, that several individuals in the crowd exclaimed to the young official that it was not permissible to take a photograph of the departing chief. They evidently took Mr. Mansfield for a professional—there was a professional photographer, a Frenchman, pursuing similar tactics. Mr. Mansfield, however, was not to be daunted. He took the bull by the horns, went to Sir Robert, explained who he was, and asked whether he might be permitted to take a photograph. Sir Robert most willingly and graciously assented, and posed at the platform of his private car while Mr. Mansfield took him. Thereupon the unexpected happened, and it rather non-plussed Mr. Mansfield, triumphant as he was owing to his success with the Inspector-General. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that hundreds of people on the platform immediately crowded round Mr. Mansfield and asked him to let them have prints of his photograph. To his friends and acquaintances he had to promise that he would, and to many strangers too. So the portrait is likely to be more expensive to Mr. Mansfield than he expected.

Lady Jordan, the popular wife of the British Minister in Peking, who was well and active and going about (paying a visit to Tientsin) while her husband was away in Hongkong and the South, has to every one's regret been attacked with typhoid fever. She is progressing favourably, though of course the malady has to take its normal course.

SHANGHAI RACE MEETING.

Shanghai, May 4th.

The Spring Meeting opened to-day in excellent weather. The turf was springy and the racing good. Results:

The Subscription Griffin Plate, three quarters of a mile:

Cloud ... (Mr Springfield) 1
Giesler ... (Mr Burkhill) 2
Kirghiz ... (Mr Moller) 3

Time 1-32 1/5.

Criterion Stakes, one mile:

Brockton ... (Mr Reid) 1
Kirkwood ... (Mr Johnstone) 2
Gemini ... (Mr Schnorr) 3

Time 2-02 4/5.

Griffin Plate, three quarters mile.

Worcester ... (Mr Reid) 1
Sokol ... (Mr Moller) 2
Pearl ... (Mr Hayes) 3

Time 3-09 4/5.

The Cathay Cup, one mile and a half:

Manchu King ... (Mr Johnstone) 1
Moriak ... (Mr Vida) 2
Swanee ... (Mr Hayes) 3

Time 3-09 4/5.

The Pou-ma-tung Cup, one mile:

Sutlej ... (Mr Hayes) 1
Waratah ... (Mr Jones) 2
Coalfield ... (Mr Crighton) 3

Time 2-03 3/5.

The Hart Legacy Cup, half a mile:

Peiho ... (Mr Hayes) 1
Defiance ... (Mr Springfield) 2
Cotawold ... (Mr Johnstone) 3

Time 58s.

The Jockey Cup, one mile:

Successor ... (Mr Adler) 1
Ravenshoe ... (Mr Sparke) 2
Amaze ... (Mr Springfield) 3

Time 2-03 3/5.

The Kiang n Cup, one mile and three quarters:

Bohemian Chief (Mr Hayes) 1
Heathfield ... (Mr Crighton) 2
Sagimarius ... (Mr Schnorr) 3

Dead heat for second place. Time 3-47 4/5.

The Eclipse Stakes, one mile and a quarter:

Best Friend ... (Mr. Reid) 1
Bucephalus ... (Mr. Schnorr) 2
Frosty Morn ... (Mr. Spark) 3
Time 2-37 4/5.
The Chihli Cup, one mile:
Kirghiz ... (Mr Moller) 1
Twedledee ... (Mr Little) 2
Ken ... (Mr Crighton) 3
Time 2-09.

Shanghai, May 5th.

The second day's racing took place in splendid weather. Sport was good, but the course became dux at the close. The results are:—

The Chu-ka-za Cup, three quarters of a mile:—

Mr Ballnus' Gemini 155 lbs. (Mr Schnorr) 1
Messrs. Cejaye and Bluenose's Game Chick 152 lbs. (Mr Moller) 2
Mr John Peel's Kirkwood 152 lbs. (Mr Johnstone) 3

Time 1m. 29-3/5.

The Shanghai Derby, one mile and a half:—

Mr Hopeful's Fama 158 lbs (Mr Jones) 1
Mr Jedmor's Sokol 155 lbs. (Mr Moller) 2
Mr F. B. Marshall's Cedar Tree 158 lbs. (Mr Vida) 3

Time 3m. 11-2/5.

The Mongolian Plate, one mile and a quarter:—

Messrs Nephew and Robson's Giesler 152 lbs. (Mr Burkhill) 1
Mr Fourstar's Cloud 155 lbs. (Mr Springfield) 2
Captain Hope's Fun 152 lbs. (Mr Quinch) 3

Time 2m. 43-1/5.

The Race Club Cup, two miles:—

Mr Morris' Heathfield 157 lbs. (Mr Crighton) 1
Mr F. B. Marshall's Myrtle Tree 150 lbs. (Mr Vida) 2
Mr Ballnus' Sagittarius 153 lbs. (Mr Schnorr) 3

Time 4m. 16 1/5. This has the record.

The Grand Stakes, one mile and a quarter:—

Mr Richmond's Diana Ken 158 lbs. (Mr Laurence) 1
Mr Ballnus' Bucephalus 161 lbs. (Mr Schnorr) 2
Messrs Middy and Nevill's Kingscross 158 lbs. (Mr Moller) 3

Time 2m. 37-1/5.

The Siccawei Cup, one mile and a quarter:—

Mr Barley's Moriak 155 lbs. (Mr Vida) 1
Mr Beverly's Brockton 155 lbs. (Mr Reid) 2
Mr Marius' Argante 155 lbs. (Mr Meyerink) 3

Time 2m. 36.

The Peking Stakes, one mile:—

Messrs Nephew and Robson's Giesler 152 lbs. (Mr Burkhill) 1
Mr Jedmor's Kirghiz 155 lbs. (Mr Moller) 2
Mr Fourstar's Cloud 155 lbs. (Mr Springfield) 3

Time 2m. 06-3/5.

The Shanghai Stakes, one mile and a half:—

Mr John Peel's Manchu King 16 lbs. (Mr Johnstone) 1
Mr N. W. Hickling's Maybury 155 lbs. (Mr Burkhill) 2
Mr Ellis Kadoorie's Bohemian Chief 158 lbs. (Mr Hayes) 3

Time 3m. 14-4/5.

The Spring Cup one mile:—

Messrs Hunter and Robson's Ravenshoe 152 lbs. (Mr Burkhill) 1
Mr Ring's Amaze 155 lbs. (Mr Meyerink) 2
Mr Fash's Marbles 161 lbs. (Mr Alderton) 3

Time 2m. 05 2/5.

The Scurry Stakes, seven furlongs:—

Messrs Hunter and Robson's Ravenshoe 158 lbs. (Mr Burkhill) 1
Mr Jedmor's Sokol 155 lbs. (Mr Moller) 2
Mr G. D. Coutt's Defiance 155 lbs. (Mr Springfield) 3

Time 1m. 46-3/5. This constitutes a record.

Shanghai, May 6th.

The third day's racing was very successful.

The GREAT NORTHERN PLATE, seven furlongs:—

Messrs. Hunter and Robson's Ravenshoe 152 lbs (Mr Burkhill) 1
Mr Toeg's Stirrup Cup 161 lbs (Mr Hayes) 2
Messrs. Cejaye and Bluenose's Game Chick 152 lbs (Mr Moller) 3

Time. 1m. 47-2/5s.

The RUBICON PLATE, one mile and a quarter:—

Mr Jedmor's Sokol 155 lbs ... (Mr Moller) 1
Mr Toeg's Sutlej 158 lbs ... (Mr Hayes) 2
Mr R. MacGregor's Best Friend 155 lbs (Mr Johnstone) 3

Time. 2m. 39-3/5 secs.

The SHANTUNG STAKES, one mile:—

Messrs Nephew and Robson's Giesler 152 lbs (Mr Burkhill) 1
Mr Jedmor's Kirghiz ... (Mr Moller) 2
The Four Star's Cloud, 155 lbs ... (Mr Springfield) 3

Time. 2m. 5-4/5 secs.

The PARI-MUTUEL, one mile and a half:—

Messrs. Hunter and Robson's Superb 151 lbs (Mr Moller) 1
Mr Marshall's Cedar Tree 151 lbs (Mr Vida) 2
Mr Marius' Argante 155 lbs (Mr Meyerink) 3

Time. 3m. 12-1/5.

The RACING STAKES one mile:—

Mr John Peel's Kirkwood 157 lbs ... (Mr Johnstone) *
Mr Hals's Lanagan, 153 lbs ... (Mr Moller) *
Mr Toeg's Pearl, 151 lbs ... (Mr Hayes) 3

* Lead heat.

Time. 2m. 04 3/5.

The YANGTZE CUP, one mile and three quarters:—

Mr Ballnus' Sagittarius 158 lbs ... (Mr Schnorr) 1
Mr Ring's Amaze 155 lbs (Mr Meyerink) 3
Mr Fash's Marbles, 161 lbs (Mr Alderton) 2

Time. 3m. 44.

The MANCHU STAKES, one mile and a quarter:—

Mr Toeg's Spree 158 lbs ... (Mr Hayes) 1
Mr A. Michie's Macemba 158 lbs ... (Mr Alderton) 2
Mr R. MacGregor's Frosty Morn 155 lbs (Mr Reid) 3

Time. 2m. 35 2/5. This constitutes a record, the fastest time recorded before being 2m. 35-3/5.

The CONSOLATION CUP, one mile and a quarter:—

Mr Marshall's Mistle Tree 155 lbs ... (Mr Vida) 1
Mr Toeg's Stirrup Cup 161 lbs (Mr Hayes) 2
Messrs. Cejaye and Bluenose's Game Chick 152 lbs (Mr Moller) 3

Time. 2m. 33.

The CHAMPION SWEEPSTAKES, one mile and a quarter:—

Mr Barley's Moriak 155 lbs ... (Mr Vida) 1
Mr Beverly's Brockton 155 lbs (Mr Reid) 2
Mr John Peel's Manchu King 161 lbs (Mr Johnstone) 3

Time. 2m. 34 sec. This is 1-3/5 secs. less than the previous record.

The NIL DESPERANDUM CUP, seven furlongs:—

Mr John Peel's Kirkburn 152 lbs ... (Mr Johnstone) 1
Messrs Bingham and Andersen's Khaki 158 lbs (Mr Gresson) 2
Oregon Sables Cantux 149 lbs (Mr Vida) 3

Time. 1m. 50-2/5.

On May 7th the piracy of a Hongkong junk was reported to the police, when the crew consisting of two men and two women with a couple of infants arrived in port in a small boat. They were in a state of collapse and were taken to the Tung Wa Hospital. Their story was that while proceeding from Canton to Hongkong with a cargo of produce their junk was surrounded on Tuesday night by a number of small boats crowded with robbers who boarded the junk and turned them adrift in a small boat. The pirates did not treat them with violence, though they took all the jewellery she possessed from one of the women. The unfortunate people were without food or drink for two days but, as stated, succeeded in reaching Hongkong. The piracy apparently took place in Chinese waters.

COMMERCIAL.

TEA.

The Amoy Chamber of Commerce Report states that the Formosa Oolongs season is closed. The export to the United States has been 16,718,929 lbs. as compared with 16,829,743 lbs. last year. To London the export has been 432,408 lbs. against 454,174 same time last year; and the balance of the export, to various countries, was 129,928 lbs. against 122,760 same time last year. The total arrivals and settlements of Tamsui Oolongs, foreign and native packed, were 45,964 half chests against 224,586 half chests for the 1906-7 season.

SILK.

The Shanghai market is reported on by Mr. F. C. Heffer under date 29th April, as follows:—No change is reported in the Home Markets. Raw Silk.—The past fortnight has seen an active market in all grades particularly for the Continent; at the close the Tsatlee market has been opened by purchases amounting to about 400 bales on basis of Double Silver Elephant at 485. Hand Filatures.—Purchases amount to about 360 bales New Styles and 1,200 bales Ordinary and Grant reel Filatures, including 250 bales Hainin Filatures. The increased demand has strengthened the market, and at the close prices have advanced Tls. 20/30 per picul. Steam Filatures.—About 200 bales have been booked for the Continent. Tussah Filatures.—Spinning Girl 1, 2 at Tls. 330/310.

RICE.

Amoy, 30th April.—The imports since the 1st have amounted to 154,849 piculs, the re-exports amounting to 1,716. Quotations are as follows:—
Shanghai, white \$4.45 per picul
Wuhu 4.20 "
Chinkiang no cargo
Penang \$4.90 per picul
Saigon, white \$4.70 to 4.85 "
Siam, white 5.00 "
Rangoon, white 4.95 "

Messrs. Wm. G. Hale & Co.'s Saigon in their Circular, dated 1st May report:—Our market closes firm. We quote for June and July delivery:—

| | |
|---|--------|
| No. 2 White sifted (trié) steam milled round | * |
| No. 2 White unsifted (ordinaire) steam milled round | \$3.70 |
| 5 % Cargo steam milled round ... | 3.27 |
| 10 % Cargo steam milled round ... | 3.23 |
| 20 % Cargo steam milled round ... | 3.18 |
| * Prices according to terms and conditions. | |

The following is a statement of this year's Exports of White Rice, Cargo Rice and Paddy:—

| Destination. | Previously | Since the 3rd April. | Total pic. |
|-----------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
| Hongkong..... | 1,311,500 | 345,000 | 1,646,500 |
| Shanghai | — | 76,400 | 76,400 |
| Ningpo | 45,300 | — | 45,300 |
| Manila | 279,300 | 51,500 | 330,800 |
| Iloilo..... | 57,000 | — | 57,000 |
| Cebu | 227,900 | — | 227,900 |
| Japan | 344,300 | 296,700 | 641,000 |
| Singapore | 155,800 | 95,800 | 251,600 |
| Batavia..... | 85,500 | — | 85,500 |
| Samarang..... | 74,200 | 33,600 | 107,800 |
| Pasaoeran..... | 31,000 | — | 31,000 |
| Sourabaya | 481,100 | 33,100 | 514,200 |
| Noumea..... | 24,000 | — | 24,000 |
| Europe | 809,600 | 564,300 | 1,373,900 |

Total..... 3,926,500 1,496,300 5,422,800
Same period of last year..... 7,592,800

Tonnage.—Quotations stand as follows: 11/12 cents to Hongkong; 20/21 cents to Java; 22/23 cents to the Philippines; 20/21 cents to Japan and 10/11 cents to Singapore.

Charters.—The following are the settlements:—

| | piculs | cts. per picul |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Ger. s.s. Loyal | 32,000 to H.K. at | 14 Cto |
| Ger. s.s. Progress | 20,000 " " " | 14 1/2 " |
| Nor. s.s. Ulv | 27,000 " " " | 15 " |
| Ger. s.s. Sexta | 36,000 " " " | 13 1/2 " |
| Nor. s.s. Tungus | 36,000 " " " | 14 " |
| Nor. s.s. Standard..... | 29,000 " " " | 12 " |
| Nor. s.s. Ulv | 29,000 " " " | 12 " |
| Br. s.s. Telemachus | 36,000 to H.K. at | 11 Rice |
| Exports for the month of April of White Rice, Cargo Rice, and Paddy amount to 345,000 piculs to Hongkong, 76,400 to Shanghai, 51,500 to Manila, 296,700 to Japan, 95,800 to Singapore, 33,100 to Sourabaya, 33,600 to Samarang and 564,300 to Europe. Total 1,496,400 piculs | | |

OPIUM.

During the last half of April, the movements in the various Hongkong Opium markets have been as follows:—

| | Malwa. | Patna. | Benares. | Persian. |
|---|---------|--------|----------|----------|
| Stocks on the 16th April, 1908 .. | 419 | 1,253 | 633 | 1,013 |
| April 18th, Imports per Oceana .. | 331 1/2 | — | — | 283 |
| " 20th " " C. Apar .. | — | 200 | — | — |
| " 27th " " Kut Sang .. | — | 600 | 280 | — |
| | 750 1/2 | 1,953 | 913 | 1,296 |
| Less Exports to Shanghai .. | 40 | 35 | 35 | — |
| Exports to East and West Coast Ports including Local Consumption for the fortnight..... | 105 1/2 | 563 | 240 | — |

Estimated Stocks this day .. 606 1,355 674 1,296

Bengal.—Owing to good demand the market has been very active and prices advanced to \$1,175 for Patna and \$1,135 for Benares. The market closes quiet.

Malwa.—Prices have advanced about \$10/20. Quotations are as follows:—

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 2 years old | \$980 |
| 3/4 " | 1,010/1,020 |
| Oldest | 1,050/1,060 |

Persian.—Best drug is quoted at \$830. Market is steady.

HONGKONG, May 8th.

Quotations are:—

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|------------|
| Malwa New | \$980 | per picul. |
| Malwa Old | \$1000 | do. |
| Malwa Older | \$1020 | do. |
| Malwa Very Old | \$1060 | do. |
| Persian Fine Quality | \$800 | do. |
| Persian Extra Fine | \$885 | do. |
| Patna New | \$1195 | per chest. |
| Patna Old | — | do. |
| Benares New | \$1145 | do. |
| Benares Old | \$— | do. |

The import of opium at Amoy from 1st January 1908 to April 24th was as follows:—

| | |
|-----------------|------------|
| Patna, old..... | nil piculs |
| " New | 80 " |
| Benares..... | 915 " |
| Persian | 94 " |
| Malwa | 7 " |
| Szechuen | 258 " |
| Yunnan..... | 166 " |
| Kiangsu | 3 " |

The quotations at Amoy on the 30th ult were:—Patna (new) \$1,048 per chest; Benares (new, bottom) \$1,170 in bond; Persian, medium, \$600; Malwa \$1,020 per picul; Szechuen \$680; Yunnan \$640.

PIECE GOODS.

Messrs. Noel, Murray & Co. of Shanghai, in their Piece Goods Report dated April, 30th state:—There is practically no change in the situation of the market since we last wrote, the stagnation then mentioned applying more to the lack of fresh business rather than to the current offtake of supplies on hand. It is true several important items, more especially American makes, show a falling off, that being accounted for by the usurpation of the Manchurian market by trade rivals, but so far as English goods are concerned there is no great reason for complaint, beyond the fact that in only a few instances does the trade show any expansion. Still, on the whole it is well up to the average, and consumers can scarcely be blamed if their requirements have not come up to the high estimates formed by their over-sanguine purveyors during the past few years. Anticipated wants are not always realised, and especially is it dangerous in markets like these that are subject to so many vagaries in their most essential factors, such as foreign Exchange, the price of the raw stable and the state of native finances, not to mention political complications that are ever prevalent in this part of the Orient, and the trend of which in the near future is so full of uncertainty. Just as things have turned out contrary to all anticipations since the conclusion of the late War, so may the future course of trade be changed in the near future, but whether in favour of the old order or its more complete elimination remains to be seen. It does not rest with the peaceful traders here; Governments will have to determine. To add to the discomfort of holders of stocks much of which are on a sterling basis through no fault of their own, Exchange has declined a further three per cent during the interval and there is no telling if the bottom has yet been reached. Naturally those who, like the regular Auction firms, import small quantities of each chop weekly and send quick returns, have been in a much more favourable position, and have not had to pay the heavy interest and storage charges that have proved an almost insufferable burden to the bulk of the goods that remain here

unsold. Another disaster has fallen upon Hankow during the interval in the shape of a regular tornado involving much loss of life and property. This, coming so soon after the other one, which superstition betokened the commencement of dire disasters, according to precedent, will not help to restore confidence there, which will be a pity, for that centre was really showing substantial signs of recovery, if not actual progress, after some years of severe depression. It is becoming more and more apparent that the British and American trade will have to rely chiefly on the Yangtze valley and Provinces further West, so that anything that happens in those regions is much to be regretted. A casual glance at the formidable list of cargo carried now by any of the regular old lines of steamers will give a fair idea of the increasing trade that is going on with the River Ports, though not necessarily in Piece Goods, and taking into consideration the increased number of steamers now engaged in the trade. With the exception of some 3,000 bales American Sheetings which have been bought from second hands for Newchwang, rendered possible by the slightly better Exchange now prevailing, nothing of any importance has come to our knowledge. The weather here has been unfavourable and clearance suffered during the interval. Manchester is easier and in consequence of the fall in Cotton is apparently in a position to solicit orders. The drop in Exchange, however, counteracts any advantage gained in the cost of production. The latest Liverpool quotation for Mid American is 5.16d. and 7 1/2 d. for Egyptian. No quotation for "future" has come in. The current quotations in New York are 8.35 cents for July and 8.30 cents for September, which does not look like any curtailment in the planting for the new crop! Manufacturers are keeping quiet and not bothering this market. The greater facility with which Yarns are moving off as compared with Piece Goods shows that there is some opening for trade where it was not so grossly over-done. The total re-exports now exceed last year's to the same date, and prospects look favourable for a continuance. The Native Cotton Crop is proving a surprise and is evidently going to be much shorter than was at one time anticipated.

Messrs. Ibert & Co., of Shanghai in their Report, dated, 30th April, state:—There has been more business doing during the week, but it has mainly been resales by dealers of former purchases, and in many cases buyers have been able to get goods at their own prices. The fall in exchange has apparently led up-country merchants to believe that there must be a limit to the decline in prices here, but the effect has been to some extent neutralized by the continuous fall in cotton. That decline has been so sudden that it looks as if it is being assisted by bear speculation; those who have maintained that good cotton will be in short supply in the summer may yet prove to be right, in which case there may be a smart reaction later on; it is said that a good deal of the cotton now in stock at Liverpool is of a quality which is not in demand. The latest quotation is 5.16d. Business shows some signs of revival at Newchwang for which market further purchases have been settled consisting mainly of American goods at prices which are anywhere from 50 candareens to a tael per piece under replacing cost. It is said that the Chinese Government has given financial assistance to some of the Chinese banks there. It is reported that about 10,000 bales of native cloth have been settled for Newchwang at advancing prices. Tientsin still continues very depressed, but stocks are said to be gradually declining there. Szechuan buyers have bought more freely in fancy goods. The results of this and last year's trading should impress upon importers the disadvantages of encouraging Chinese to buy too heavily; the trade could be easily carried on with half the stock which Shanghai has been accustomed to hold.

MISCELLANEOUS EXPORTS.

Per P. & O. steamer *Devanla*, sailed 2nd May, 1908. For Hamburg:—20 cases cigars. For Manchester:—225 bales waste silk. For Gibraltar:—2 cases silk piece goods. For St. Chamond:—20 bales raw silk. For Barcelona:—25 bales raw silk. For Lyons:—541 bales raw silk. For Marseilles:—27 cases cigars, 100 bales waste silk, 319 bales raw silk, 8 bales feathers. For London:—500 boxes tea, 125 bales raw silk, 4 cases silks, 1 case old embroidery, 1 case watches, 28 cases cigars, 240 bales waste silk, 6 cases bird feathers, 1 case bamboo and tortoise shell, 8 packages clothing and books, 5 cases instruments. For Naples:—9 cases cigars. For Trieste:—6 cases cigars.

AMOY MARKETS.

The following were the quotations at Amoy on 30th April:—

IMPORTS.

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Cotton—Bombay | no cargo | picul. |
| Shanghai | \$29.80 | " |
| Ningpo | 29.60 | " |
| Rangoon | no cargo | " |
| Yarn—English 24s | 185.00 | bale. |
| 60s | 175.00 | " |
| Bombay, 10s | \$99.00 at 103.00 | " |
| 16s | 116.00 at 120.00 | " |
| 20s | 122.00 at 130.00 | " |

Cotton Piece Goods.—

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Grey Shirtings, 8½ lbs. | 4.00 | piece. |
| 7 lbs. | 2.55 | " |
| T. Cloths 6 lbs. ordinary | 2.70 | " |
| " 34 in. & under by 30 yds. | 3.00 | " |
| " 23 " " 34 by 40 | 3.20 | " |
| " 23 " " 37 by 24 | 2.50 | " |
| White Shirtings, 1st quarter | 7.20 | " |
| " 2nd " | 6.15 | " |
| " 3rd " | 4.00 | " |
| Turkey Red, 17½ lbs. | 6.00 | " |
| Drills, 2½ lbs. and under | 6.60 | " |
| " over 12½ lbs. | no cargo | " |
| Assorted Brocades | 4.45 | " |
| Brocades, White | 5.00 | " |
| " Dyed | 4.45 | " |
| Figured Shirtings, White | 12.50 | 100 yds. |
| " Dyed | 13.50 | " |
| Chintz | no cargo | " |
| Shirtings, Dyed | no cargo | " |
| Damasks | no cargo | " |
| Woolens.—Camlets, Scarlet 60 | no cargo | " |
| yards 31 in. | no cargo | " |
| Assorted Camlets, 30 yd. 31 in. | 23.00 | piece. |
| Lastings, 30 yards 31 in. | 21.50 | " |
| Long Ells, Scarlet, 24 yards | 9.50 | " |
| 31 in. | 9.50 | " |
| Assorted | no cargo | " |
| Spanish Stripes, Scarlet | 1.30 | " |
| Do. Assorted | 0.95 | yard |
| Lustres, Figured | 0.16 | " |
| Metal:—Lead, Best Brands | 11.20 | picul |
| Tin, Malacca | 91.00 at 92.00 | " |
| Nail Road Iron | 6.60 | " |
| Quicksilver | 95.00 | flask |
| Old Iron | 2.60 | picul |
| Ironwire | 12.80 | " |
| Sesamum Seed:—Formosa | no cargo | " |
| Do. Chinkiang | 8.70 | picul |
| Oil Cakes:—Formosa | 2.60 | " |
| Pepper:—Black | 26.00 | " |
| Do. White | 55.00 | " |
| Sapanwood:—Siam | 4.20 | " |
| Do. Manila | 3.50 | " |
| Sandalwood:—New | 13.60 | " |
| Do. Old | 16.80 | " |
| Rattans:—Banjermassang | 12.00 | " |
| Do. Straits | 4.40 | " |
| Wheat—Shanghai | \$3.60 | picul. |
| Chefoo | no cargo | " |
| Chinkiang | 3.45 | " |
| Flour—California | 2.18 at 2.28 50 lbs. | bag. |
| Bean cake—Chefoo | 3.50 | picul. |
| Newchwang | 3.50 | " |
| Peas—Chefoo, Green | 3.70 | " |
| Yellow | 3.95 | " |
| Newchwang Green | 4.40 | " |
| Beche de Mer—White | 22.00 | " |
| Black | 52.00 | " |
| Tea Mats | 6.60 at 7.30 | 100 pieces. |
| Kerosene—American Cases | 3.07 | case. |
| American Bulk | 2.37 | " |
| Burmah | 2.80 | " |
| Sumatra | 2.92 | " |
| Japanese | — | " |
| Borneo Tins | 2.67 | 10 gallons. |
| Borneo Bulk | 2.22 | " |
| Sumatra Tins | 2.92 | " |
| Sumatra Bulk | 2.47 | " |
| Coal—Japan | 12.50 | ton. |
| Tobacco Leaf—Hankow | 20.00 | picul. |
| Vermicelli (Bean) | 18.50 | " |

EXPORTS.

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| Sugar—Amoy White, No. 1 | 7.60 | picul. |
| Brown Cha-soa | 4.80 | " |
| Frown Tue Tung | — | " |
| Candy | 11.00 | " |
| Hemp Bags, Old | 4.00 | 100. |
| Sacking | 200.00 | 1,000 |
| Paper I Quality | 18.50 | picul. |
| " II | 7.00 | " |
| Tobacco, Prepared | 26.00 | " |
| Kittysols | 18.50 | 100. |

HONGKONG QUOTATIONS.

HONGKONG, 11th May, 1908.

The following are the latest quotations in the Hongkong markets:—

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Apricot | \$ 14 |
| Borax | \$ 15 |
| Cassia | \$ 18 |
| Cloves | \$ 30 |
| Camphor | \$ 95 |
| Cow Bezoar | \$ 120 |
| Fennel Seed | \$ 8 |
| Galangal | \$ 4 |
| Grapes | \$ 9 |
| Kismis | \$ 16 |
| Glue | \$ 32 |
| Olibanum | \$ 13 |
| Oil Sandalwood | \$ 135 |
| " Rosa | \$ 50 to 125 |
| " Cassia | \$ 240 |
| Raisins | \$ 12 |
| Senna Leaves | \$ 8 |
| Sandalwood | \$ 23 |
| Saltpetre | \$ 12 |

SHARE REPORTS.

HONGKONG, 8th May, 1908. — Business generally has been less active during the past week, but for some stocks, notably Banks, a fair investment enquiry is still met with, and our market closes firm with a tendency to some advance. Bar Silver is slightly lower at 24½ d. and sterling exchange has declined to 19½ T.T. Shanghai is unchanged at 74½ T.T. BANKS.—Hongkong and Shanghai after sales at \$692½ have advanced to \$695 with sales and further buyers. London has improved to £74. Nationals can be placed at \$52.

MARINE INSURANCES.—Unions are quiet with small sales and further sellers at \$797½. China Traders and North Chinas are still in request at last quotations, and Yangtze at the improved rate of \$145. Cantons have been sold in a small way at \$235, and more shares are procurable.

FIRE INSURANCES.—Hongkongs are firmer with buyers at \$312½, and Chinas at \$92 after sales at \$91 and \$91½.

SHIPPING.—Hongkong, Canton and Macao have been booked at \$29, and a few more shares are procurable at the rate. Indo-Chinas, China & Manilas and Douglases have not been dealt in during the interval, & quotations are unchanged. There are sellers of Star Ferries at \$32 and \$18 for the old and new issues respectively, and Shell Transports could probably be obtained at 45s.

REFINERIES.—China Sugars are quiet at \$135 after a small sale at the rate, and Luzons are still neglected at \$15.

MINING.—A small parcel of Ranbs has been done at \$8½ at which rate there are buyers. Charbonnages continue in request at \$560.

DOCKS, WHARVES AND GODOWNS.—Hongkong and Whampoa Docks have been booked at \$103, \$103½ and \$104, market closing with a few more shares obtainable at the latter rate. Hongkong and Kowloon Wharves have been done at \$52. New Amoy Docks continue in request at \$9½ and Shanghai Docks have buyers at the improved rate of Tls. 83. Shanghai and Hongkew Wharves are quiet at Tls. 223.

LANDS, HOTELS AND BUILDINGS.—Hongkong Lands are quiet at \$99 with small sales and further sellers. Kowloon Lands, West Points and Hotels are all procurable at quotation, and Shanghai Lands at the slightly lower quotation of Tls. 113½ in the North. Humphreys Estates have sold and continue in request at \$10.

COTTON MILLS.—Hongkong Cottons after sales at \$10½ have improved to \$11 with buyers. We have heard of no local business in the Northern stocks for which closing quotations are as follows:—Ewos Tls. 58; International Tls. 57; Laou Kung Mows T 77½ and Soy Chees T. 260.

MISCELLANEOUS.—China Borneos have again been booked at \$10½, and China Providents at \$9. Dairy Farms are wanted at \$19½ after small sales at the rate, and Electrics are in demand at the improved quotation of \$15½ ex the dividend and bonus of \$1.20 per share for 1907, paid on the 4th inst. Green Island Cements in the early part of the week were done in a small way at \$10½, but latterly this stock has hung fire, and our market closes with some sellers at the quotation. Peak Tramways have improved to \$13½ for the old scrip, and \$2½ for the new, both closing with buyers. Ropes have again been booked at \$33 at which rate a few shares are procurable. Union Water Boats can be placed at \$11½ and Watkins at \$3.

Quotations are as follows:—

| COMPANY. | PAID UP | QUOTATIONS. |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| Alhambra | Ps. 200 | Nominal |
| Banks— | | |
| Hongkong & Shanghai | \$125 | \$695, buyers |
| National B. of China | £8 | £51, buyers |
| Bell's Asbestos E. A. | 12s. 6d. | \$7½, sellers |
| China-Borneo Co. | \$12 | \$11, sellers |
| China Light & P. Co. | (\$10) | \$6, buyers |
| China Provident | (\$1) | \$9, buyers |
| Cotton Mills— | | |
| Ewo | Tls. 50 | Tls. 58 |
| Hongkong | \$10 | \$11, buyers |
| International | Tls. 75 | Tls. 57 |
| Laou Kung Mow | Tls. 100 | Tls. 77½ |
| Soychee | Tls. 500 | Tls. 260 |
| Dairy Farm | \$6 | \$19½, sales |
| Docks & Wharves— | | |
| H. & K. Wharf & G. | \$50 | \$52, sales |
| H. & W. Dock | \$50 | \$104, sellers |
| New Amoy Dock | \$61 | \$9½, buyers |
| Shanghai Dock and Eng. Co., Ltd. | Tls. 100 | Tls. 83, buyers |
| Shanghai & H. Wharf | Tls. 100 | Tls. 223 |
| Fenwick & Co., Geo. | \$25 | \$18, sellers |
| G. Island Cement | \$10 | \$10½, sellers |
| Hongkong & C. Gas | \$10 | \$175 |
| Hongkong Electric | \$10 | \$15½, buyers |
| Hongkong Hotel Co. | \$50 | \$96, sellers |
| Hongkong Ice Co. | \$25 | \$225, sellers |
| H. K. Milling Co., Ltd. | \$100 | Nominal |
| Hongkong Rope Co. | \$10 | \$33, sales |
| Insurances— | | |
| Canton | \$50 | \$235, sales |
| China Fire | \$20 | \$91½, buyers |
| China Traders | \$25 | \$86½, buyers |
| Hongkong Fire | \$50 | \$312½, buyers |
| North China | \$25 | Tls. 78, buyers |
| Union | \$100 | \$797½, sales & sel. |
| Yangtze | \$60 | \$145 |
| Land and Buildings— | | |
| H'kong Land Invest. | \$100 | \$99, sales |
| Humphreys Estate | \$10 | \$10, sales & buy. |
| Kowloon Land & B. | \$30 | \$26 |
| Shanghai Land | Tls. 50 | Tls. 114 |
| West Point Building | \$50 | \$19, sellers |
| Mining— | | |
| Charbonnages | Pos. 250 | \$560, buyers |
| Ranbs | 18/10 | \$8½, buyers |
| Peak Tramways | (\$10) | \$13½, buyers |
| Philippine Co. | (\$1) | \$2.10, buyers |
| Refineries— | | |
| China Sugar | \$10 | \$135, sales |
| Luzon Sugar | \$10 | \$15 |
| Steamship Companies | | |
| China and Manila | \$25 | \$10, sellers |
| Douglas Steamship | \$50 | \$40 |
| H. Canton & M. | \$15 | \$29, sellers |
| Indo-China S. N. Co. | £5 | \$38 |
| Shell Transport Co. | £1 | \$24 |
| Star Ferry | \$10 | \$5/- |
| Do. New | \$5 | \$32, sellers |
| South China M. Post. | \$25 | \$18, sellers |
| Steam Laundry Co. | \$5 | \$23, buyers |
| Stores & Dispensaries | | |
| Campbell, M. & Co. | \$10 | \$15, sellers |
| Powell & Co., Wm. | \$10 | \$5 |
| Watkins | \$10 | \$3, buyers |
| Watson & Co., A. S. | \$10 | \$10, sales |
| Wiesmann Ltd. | \$100 | \$185 |
| United Asbestos | \$4 | \$13, buyers |
| Do. Founders | \$10 | \$150, buyers |
| Union Waterboat Co. | \$10 | \$11½, buyers |

VERNON & SMYTH, Brokers.

Messrs. J.P. Bisset & Co.'s SHARE REPORT for the week ending 30th April:—Since our last issue the share market has been decidedly active, and a good business has been done. Shares in Maatschappij & Co. in Langkat Co. continue to improve and there has been a strong demand for cash and forward shares. Banks.—Hongkong and Shanghai Banks have sustained a sudden and emphatic decline owing to a large number of shares being put on this market from London. The opening rate on the 23rd was nominally \$710, but sales have since been made at \$705, \$700, \$697½, \$695 and \$693; at the close we should quote the market as steady at \$695. Insurance.—Union Insurance. A few shares are on offer at \$80 ex div. North-China Insurance shares are wanted at Tls. 80. Yangtze Insurance: The

dividend having been paid yesterday all the shares rank equally. Transactions have taken place at \$147½ and there are further buyers. Shipping.—There is no business reported under this heading. Docks and Wharves.—Shanghai Dock and Engineering Co. Ltd. There has been a demand for shares but very few are obtainable. Rates at closing are Tls. 82 for cash and Tls. 84 for July buyers. Shanghai and Hongkew Wharf shares: A fair business has been done in this stock at Tls. 224 for cash and Tls. 230 to Tls. 229 for June. The market is steady at the close. Yangtze Wharf and Godown: A transaction is reported at Tls. 212½. Sugar Cos.—No business reported this week. Mining.—Chinese Engineering and Mining Co. A few shares are wanted at Tls. 16½. Lands.—Shanghai Land Investment Co: A slight reaction has taken place in this stock and a fair number of shares are on offer at Tls. 114 without finding buyers. Anglo-French Land Investment Co. Shares have been placed at Tls. 98. Industrial—Ewo Cottons have been in demand at Tls. 57 for cash and Tls. 58½ for June. Shanghai Gas Co: A few shares have changed hands at Tls. 108. China Flour Mills have declined to Tls. 51. Matschappij &c. in Langkats: A considerable business has been done this week, our market opening with cash shares at Tls. 470. On the 25th a slight weakness prevailed and transactions are reported at Tls. 457½ for cash and Tls. 467½ for June. On Monday, the 27th however, quite a rush took place for cash and forward shares, and rates quickly improved to Tls. 470 and Tls. 472½ for cash, and Tls. 475 for June. A strong demand has continued ever since, and our closing rates are Tls. 475 cash and Tls. 485 for June. We hear of a transaction for September at Tls. 505. The market at closing is decidedly strong. Shanghai Sumatra Tobacco: Cash shares are wanted at Tls. 87. Kalumpung Rubbers have improved to Tls. 45. Shanghai Electric Construction Co: There are still sellers at £10. Miscellaneous.—Hall & Holtz, Ltd. have been placed at \$22. Astor House Hotel Co. shares are wanted at \$22. Horse Bazaars have been dealt in at Tls. 46 for June. China Import Lumber Co: A transaction is reported at Tls. 90 and there are further buyers. Loans & Debentures.—Shanghai Municipal five & half per cent Debentures have been dealt in at Tls. 91; Shanghai Waterworks 6 per cent Debs. have been placed at par.

EXCHANGE.

MONDAY, May 11th.

| | |
|--|--------------|
| ON LONDON.— | |
| Telegraphic Transfer | 1/9 |
| Bank Bills, on demand | 1/9½ |
| Bank Bills, at 30 days' sight | 1/9½ |
| Bank Bills at 4 months' sight | 1/9½ |
| Credits, at 4 months' sight | 1/9½ |
| Documentary Bills, 4 months' sight | 1/9½ |
| ON PARIS.— | |
| Bank Bills, on demand | 2/30½ |
| Credits 4 months' sight | 2/25½ |
| ON GERMANY.— | |
| On demand | 1/79½ |
| ON NEW YORK.— | |
| Bank Bills, on demand | 42½ |
| Credits, 60 days' sight | 14½ |
| ON BOMBAY.— | |
| Telegraphic Transfer | 132½ |
| Bank, on demand | 132½ |
| ON CALCUTTA.— | |
| Telegraphic Transfer | 132½ |
| Bank on demand | 132½ |
| ON SHANGHAI.— | |
| Bank, at sight | 74½ |
| Private, 30 days' sight | 75½ |
| ON YOKOHAMA.— | |
| On demand | 83 |
| ON MANILA.— | |
| On demand | 86½ |
| ON SINGAPORE.— | |
| On demand | 75½ p.c. pm. |
| ON BATAVIA.—On demand | |
| ON HAIPHONG.—On demand | 8½ p.c. pm. |
| ON SAIGON.—On demand | 8½ p.c. pm. |
| ON BANGKOK.—On demand | |
| SOVEREIGNS, Bank's Buying Rate | \$11.20 |
| GOLD LEAF, 100 fine, per tael | \$ 8.75 |
| BAR SILVER, per oz | 24½ |

SUBSIDIARY COINS.

| | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | per cent. | |
| Chinese | 20 cents pieces | \$8.15 | discount. |
| " | 10 " " | 8.75 | " |
| Hongkong | 20 " " | 7.40 | " |
| " | 10 " " | 7.95 | " |

SHIPPING.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES SINCE LAST MAIL.

May—

ARRIVALS.

1. Chowf, German str., from Bangkok.
1. Childar, Norwegian str., from Bangkok.
1. Devanha, British str., from Yokohama.
1. Heim, Norwegian str., from Bangkok.
1. Hongkong, French str., from Haiphong.
1. Kashing, British str., from Chefoo.
1. Mathilde, German str., from Haiphong.
1. P. Sigismund, Ger. str., from Melbourne.
1. Siam, British str., from Shanghai.
1. Tean, British str., from Manila.
2. E. of Douglas, Br. str., from Port Kemble.
2. Foochow, British str., from Chinkiang.
2. Hikosan Maru, Japanese str., from Moji.
2. Kaifong, British str., from Iloilo.
2. Kiangping, Chinese str., from Chinkiang.
2. Nippon M., Jap. str., from San Francisco.
2. Proteus, Norwegian str., from Bangkok.
2. Quinta, German str., from Tsingtau.
2. Shantung, British str., from Hongay.
2. Tydeus, British str., from Shanghai.
3. Haitan, British str., from Coast Ports.
3. Indien, Danish str., from Moji.
3. Meefoo, Chinese str., from Shanghai.
3. Oceano, British str., from Wakamatsu.
3. Taikoson M., Jap. str., from Kuchinotsu.
3. Tango Maru, Japanese str., from Japan.
4. E. of China, British str., from Vancouver.
4. Halvard, Norwegian str., from Singapore.
4. J. Diederichsen, Ger. str., from Hoihow.
4. Kumsang, British str., from Calcutta.
4. Loongsang, British str., from Manila.
4. Moyori Maru, Jap. str., from London.
4. Rubi, British str., from Manila.
4. S. v. Langkat, Dutch str., from Tientsin.
4. Spir, Norwegian str., from Chefoo.
4. Yorek, German str., from Yokohama.
5. Amigo, German str., from Haiphong.
5. Asia, British str., from San Francisco.
5. Benarty, British str., from Singapore.
5. Buelow, German str., from Hamburg.
5. Chowtai, German str., from Bangkok.
5. Eiger, Norwegian str., from Bangkok.
5. Hanoi, French str., from Haiphong.
5. Nore, British str., from Yokohama.
5. Silesia, German str., from Shanghai.
5. Soshu Maru, Jap. str., from Shanghai.
6. Candia, British str., from London.
6. Capri, Italian str., from Singapore.
6. Chunsang, British str., from Sourabaya.
6. Daijin Maru, Japanese str., from Swatow.
6. Haimun, British str., from Coast Ports.
6. Hakata Maru, Jap. str., from Singapore.
6. Indasamba, British str., from New York.
6. Rajaburi, German str., from Bangkok.
6. Standard, Norwegian str., from Saigon.
6. Telemachus, British str., from Saigon.
7. Feiching, Chinese str., from Shanghai.
7. Haitan, French str., from Hoihow.
7. Hangsang, British str., from Shanghai.
7. Hongmoh, British str., from Penang.
7. Pakhoi, British str., from Wuhu.
7. Pronto, Norwegian str., from Haiphong.
7. Singan, British str., from Haiphong.
7. Triumph, German str., from Tourane.

May—

DEPARTURES.

1. C. Diederichsen, Ger. str., for Haiphong.
1. Haiching, British str., for Coast Ports.
1. Kalomo, British str., for Shanghai.
1. Pongtong, German str., for Bangkok.
1. Taiwan, British str., for Saigon.
1. Tungus, Norwegian str., for Japan.
1. Yuensang, British str., for Manila.
2. Devanha, British str., for Europe &c.
2. Grybeval, British str., for Port Said.
2. Johanne, German str., for Hoihow.
2. Kutsang, British str., for Shanghai.
2. Manchuria, Am. str., for San Francisco.
2. Namsang, British str., for Singapore.
2. Siam, British str., for Singapore.
2. Torge Viken, Norwegian str., for Labuan.
2. Zafiro, British str., for Manila.
3. Chibli, British str., for Hoihow.
3. Cheongsing, British str., for Swatow.
3. Hokuto Maru, Japanese str., for Saigon.
3. Joshin Maru, Japanese str., for Swatow.
3. Landrat Scheiff, German str., for Moji.
3. Nord, Norwegian str., for Hongay.
3. P. Sigismund, Ger. str., for Yokohama.
3. Shaohsing, British str., for Shanghai.
4. Choising, German str., for Amoy.
4. Hongkong, French str., for Haiphong.
4. Hopsang, British str., for Moji.
4. Kwanglee, Chinese str., for Shanghai.

5. Eastern, British str., for Moji.
5. Haitan, British str., for Coast Ports.
5. Heim, Norwegian str., for Bangkok.
5. Hikosan Maru, Japanese str., for Saigon.
5. Indien, Danish str., for Saigon.
5. Mathilde, German str., for Hoihow.
5. Moyori Maru, Jap. str., for Shanghai.
5. Ragnar, Norwegian str., for Rajang.
5. S. v. Langkat, Dutch str., for Palembang.
5. Tydeus, British str., for Singapore.
5. Tungshing, British str., for Swatow.
5. Yingchow, British str., for Amoy.
6. Benarty, British str., for Nagasaki.
6. Buelow, German str., for Shanghai.
6. Choysang, British str., for Shanghai.
6. Devawongse, German str., for Swatow.
6. Fausang, British str., for Saigon.
6. Halvard, Norwegian str., for Singapore.
6. J. Diederichsen, German str., for Pakhoi.
6. Kaifong, British str., for Cebu.
6. Nore, British str., for Singapore.
6. Numantia, Ger. str., for Moji & Portland.
6. Sexta, German str., for Newchwang.
6. Tean, British str., for Manila.
6. Yorek, German str., for Europe &c.
7. Candia, British str., for Shanghai.
7. Childar, Norwegian str., for Bangkok.
7. Hakata Maru, Japanese str., for Kobe.
7. Ithaka, German str., for Chinkiang.
7. Shantung, German str., for Sourabaya.
7. Silesia, German str., for Colombo.
7. Soshu Maru, Japanese str., for Swatow.
7. Taikoson Maru, Jap. str., for Kuchinotsu.

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